

NEW TIMES

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DESERT:
ETERNAL WASTELAND
OR POTENTIAL
FOR PRODUCTION?



Hewlett Johnson, Alexander Fadeyev and Pablo Picasso during a recess between sessions of the First World Congress for Peace in Paris.



April 25, 1949. The Pleyel Hall in Paris. The First World Congress for Peace is winding up its deliberations. Summing up, the French writer Louis Aragon said: "We shall succeed in uniting and understanding one another. We shall win the battle for peace, in other words, the battle for life." That battle was just beginning.

The anti-war movement has come a long way since then. Its path has been far from smooth. It has been marked by hope and disappointment, trust and prejudice, victories and setbacks.

This year Copenhagen hosted the World Congress dedicated to the International Year of Peace. The enemies of the

500 million signed the Stockholm Appeal.

anti-war forces did their utmost to torpedo the Copenhagen forum, to prevent the representatives of public movements of different political orientation of 136 countries from getting together for a frank dialogue, from discussing a programme of joint action to ensure the survival of mankind. But they could not stop the congress from being held.

The peace movement has withstood countless attacks. It has become stronger and truly worldwide, taking in a broad spectrum of political opin-

ion. Important landmarks in its progress were:

In the 1950s the Stockholm Appeal for the prohibition of atomic weapons was signed by 500 million people the world over.

In the 1970s the new Stockholm appeal rallied

Three stages of disarmament, a poster put out by the World Peace Council.

a new generation—hundreds of millions of people—to the fight for disarmament.

In October 1986 came the call issued in Copenhagen by public leaders of the Delhi Six to stop the arms race and prevent it from being carried over into outer space. Today all those who are concerned over the fate of our planet vote for it.

The battle for life continues.

For earlier instalments of this brief review of the history of anti-war ideas and the struggle for peace see issues Nos. 1, 4, 6, 12, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, 30, 33, 37, 40, 43.

THREE STAGES

2000

1995

1990



JUST SAY NO

Who says one should not borrow experience from the U.S., especially in combating an evil it has long been familiar with while others have only recently had to deal with it? A mass Just Say No movement is reported to have started in the U.S. If you are offered drugs just say No. Today more than 10,000 youth clubs use this slogan.

It is certainly both simple and catchy. So why use it only to fight drugs? Much greater dangers than drugs loom on the horizon. The nuclear sickness afflicting U.S. politicians is becoming increasingly contagious, spreading from aircraft to missiles and from missiles into space. What is to be done? How can the slide towards disaster be checked?

Just say No

--when a nuclear sword is proffered "for ever and ever";

--when the right to go on testing is insisted on though the U.S.S.R. has abstained for over a year;

--when it is proposed that space be desecrated with nuclear weapons in the selfish interests of the arms manufacturers;

--when new NATO programmes for nuclear, conventional, chemical and other weapons are being adopted, although the socialist countries have long been proposing reductions in such arsenals;

--when Washington is shelving the SALT-2 joint commitments to curb strategic arms and is urging us to do likewise;

--when the pretence is being maintained that the Reykjavik summit never happened.

In all cases, just say No.

This is not simply rhetoric. President Reagan himself remarked that before he had completed the now popular phrase at election rallies young people jumped up to chorus No! So, we must not wait either. Today man does not live by SDI alone. Humanity has amassed no mean experience in jointly preserving the supreme values of life. We must not acquiesce in the danger in advance. Especially today when there are real prospects for sloughing off the nuclear burden by the 21st century. When the world community is encouraged to indulge in animosity and confrontation instead of advancing to the great and noble goal of preserving peace, it should just say No. And when concrete disarmament moves are proposed let us just say Yes.

FROM OUR MAILBAG

In my view the new thinking in politics which the Soviet Union advocates does not mean that the United States has the right to carry out one nuclear test after another while the U.S.S.R. alone should unilaterally observe a test ban perpetually. The new thinking is above all non-imperialist thinking, adherence to the principle of equal security, equality of relations among nations, and peaceful coexistence based on mutual advantage.

A. Khan NIXON
Rossendale, Lancashire,
Britain

Carthage, legend has it, fought three wars. After the first war it was still quite strong, after the second, it was merely habitable. The third war wiped it off the face of the earth. Reagan's "star wars" plans presage a similar fate for our planet. The nuclear arsenals already existing are enough to destroy all life on earth several times over. That is why I support the peace proposals advanced by the Soviet Union.

Günter FIEDLER
Berlin, G.D.R.

Nothing has been done of late in Italy to restrict neonazi propaganda. The walls are covered with fascist graffiti. The movies and the TV show countless films glorifying fascism. All this is especially beamed to the young, who know nothing of the horrors of war and hence are easy prey for the neofascists. I believe that we must raise an insurmountable barrier to those who are bent on reviving fascism.

Roberto COLUCCINI
Viareggio, Italy

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

HOBOE
ВРЕМЯ

TEMPS
NOUVEAUX

NOWE
CZASY

TIEMPOS
NUEVOS

NEUE
ZEIT

nová
doba

TEMPI
NUOVI

TEMPOS
NOVOS

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December 22,
1986

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by A. Gushchin

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POLITICAL SHORTSIGHTEDNESS IS DANGEROUS

Poland's leader **WOJCIECH JARUZELSKI** replies to questions

from New Times interviewer **Sergei Golyakov**

How did you appraise the decision of the U.S. Administration not to observe the provisions of the SALT-2 treaty?

The Romans answered that question 2,000 years ago when they said that agreements were concluded in order to be observed. But seriously, we learned of that decision with indignation and concern. Shortsightedness in politics is all the more dangerous the greater the responsibility that rests with the decision-makers.

I should like to draw your attention to the three following points.

First, there is and must be an inner logic to the process of limitation and control of armaments. You cannot violate that logic with impunity any more than you can switch over suddenly from right-side traffic to left-side.

Second, what is significant is the moment chosen for this irresponsible decision. One gets the impression that those who manufacture the bombers are in a panic at the prospect of the market for the sale of their output being curtailed.

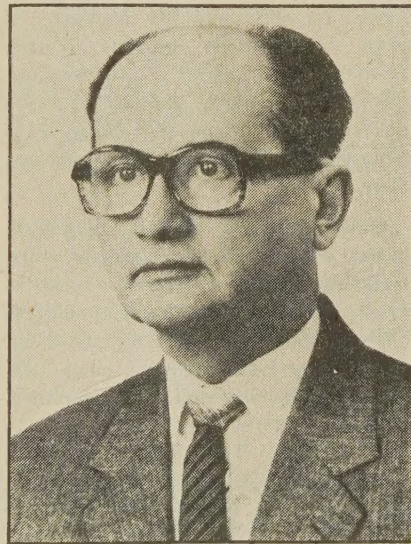
The fact that this move was undertaken immediately after Reykjavik indicates that the purpose was deliberately to provoke the negotiating partner. There are two ways of playing chess: one—by moving the figures on the board, the other—by tipping the board and the figures onto the floor when the going gets tough.

And lastly, what amazes me about this decision, if I may be forgiven for saying so, is the provincialism of the image of the Soviet Union it projects. It is a pity nobody took the trouble to learn something about the history of this country. If they had they would find that Moscow has never been scared by anything. I have good grounds to assume that in the given instance the result will be the same. I am confident that we have the will and the potential not to allow the balance to be upset.

At the Vienna review meeting of the Conference on Security and Coopera-

tion in Europe the Polish People's Republic called on the countries signatory to the Helsinki Final Act to ratify the agreements and international accords on human rights. What significance do you attach to the practical realization of this call?

The human rights question indeed loomed large at the Helsinki conference, although we do not think it was warranted very much in the case of Europe. I could easily name other parts



of the world where the Western partners do not display half as much fervour, to put it mildly, as on this score (suffice it to mention Chile, South Africa and other such "oases" of democracy and freedom).

I do not want to say, of course, that human rights should not be discussed. The responsible attitude to this question displayed by the socialist countries was convincingly manifested, for instance, in the recent Soviet proposal to organize a meeting in Moscow of CSCE experts on humanitarian problems.

We hold that since the human rights question is so important everything

must be done to eschew demagoguery and shield it from cheap, tedious propaganda.

Negotiations make sense only when they are constructive. And to make them constructive it is necessary to outline a definite framework for discussion. This framework is determined by a number of international agreements on various questions that have one thing in common—they precisely define the principle of sovereign solution of international problems.

Moreover, it would evidently be perfectly legitimate on our part to ask—by what right, legal or moral, are some Western countries so self-confident as to presume to lecture others in the matter of human rights? Reality has time and again shown many of their declarations to be untrue. It is a well-known fact that it is not in our countries that tens of millions of people are deprived of the right to work, that the ban on jobs on political grounds is not practised in the socialist countries, and that the kind of witchhunts you find in the American trade unions, for instance, where officials have to swear under oath that they are enemies of communism, do not occur east of the Elbe.

One wonders what they would say in the West if as many people had died in Poland as a result of the unrest as have died since the beginning of the conflict in Northern Ireland, or if we were to require our trade union functionaries to take ideological loyalty tests. But let us not dwell on this question.

We want to discuss these problems seriously. We want to reach agreement. But, believe me, it is difficult to discuss these matters, say, with the United States, which presumes to know everything better than us, but has not yet ratified a single one of the 19 agreements and international covenants on this subject, including the basic declaration on human rights.

Warsaw

Pooling Our Research Efforts

GURY MARCHUK, President,
U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences

Soviet-Indian scientific contacts go back to the fifties. Mutual interest in scientific cooperation, the rich traditions of the Soviet and Indian schools of fundamental and applied sciences which provided the basis on which to promote this cooperation, and the lively scientific exchanges already in progress at the time called for intergovernment agreements and a switch to major joint projects.

In the seventies, intergovernment agreements were signed on scientific and technical cooperation in the applied sciences and technology, agriculture, medicine, public health, and the peaceful utilization of atomic energy, as well as on cooperation between our two countries' Academies of Sciences. The agreements were supplemented with protocols on joint efforts in space research and other fields.

Within the framework of the said agreements, Soviet and Indian research institutes and other establishments draw up cooperation programmes for years ahead. Under the programme for cooperation in the applied sciences and technology for 1984-87 alone, we do joint research on 22 major projects, involving 112 separate problems being tackled by 66 Soviet and 48 Indian research organizations. These efforts, which are being carried out on the frontiers of modern knowledge, pave the way for further scientific and technological progress. Soviet and Indian researchers have joined hands in developing new energy sources (MHD generators, for example), powder metallurgy and catalysis techniques and new types of laser, as well as in meteorology, oceanography and corrosion prevention.

Wide-ranging Soviet-Indian scientific cooperation has already borne ample fruit. Scientists at the Otto Schmidt Institute of Physics of the Earth (U.S.S.R.) and the National Geophysical Research Institute (India) have been doing interesting research into the micropulsations of the geoelectric and geomagnetic fields for some years at the Chautulal (Andhra Pradesh) and Ettayapuram (Tamil Nadu) observatories in India.

Soviet-Indian expeditions have carried out an in-depth seismic sounding of the Indian Shield—a project important for locating the incidence of mineral resources with a high degree of accuracy.

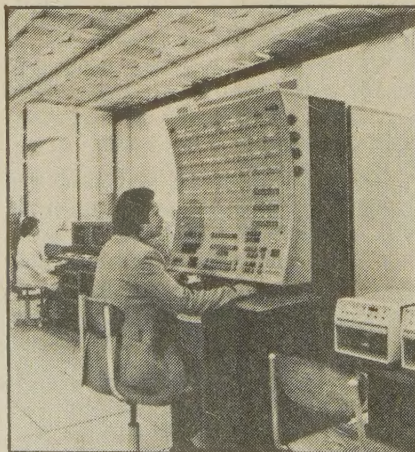
Soviet-Indian cooperation in space exploration is making progress. Three Indian artificial earth satellites of the Bhaskara and Aryabhata type have been launched by India with Soviet assistance. A joint Soviet-Indian satellite tracking station has been functioning in Kavalur, Tamil Nadu State, since 1977. Cooperation in this field culminated in the joint space flight by one Indian and two Soviet cosmonauts on board the Salyut 7—Soyuz T-10—Soyuz T-11 orbital complex in 1984.

Years of fruitful cooperation between Indian scientists and the Institute of High Temperatures of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences in the development of new energy sources led to the commissioning of the first Indian MHD generator in Tiruchirappally, Tamil Nadu State, in 1985.

Other important spheres of Soviet-Indian cooperation are agriculture and medical science. Professor Svyatoslav Fyodorov, the Soviet ophthalmologist, has won truly nationwide renown in India. He has been there on many occasions to lecture and give demonstrations.

The latest generation of Soviet-made computers will process data obtained from seismic oil and gas prospecting in India.

APN photo



The agreement on basic directions of economic, trade, scientific and technological cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and India for the period up to the year 2000 signed in Moscow in May 1985 marked a major advance in Soviet-Indian scientific and technical cooperation. It outlined the highways of interaction between the two countries in science and technology, giving priority to biotechnology, laser research, cryogenics and other fundamental sciences, and in applied spheres, to energy production, the development of new materials and waste-free manufacturing processes, computer engineering and microelectronics.

While noting the progress made in Soviet-Indian scientific and technical cooperation, we realize that it should keep pace with the dynamics of Soviet-Indian relations as a whole.

During their recent Delhi dialogue, Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi reached agreements providing for an entirely new approach to cooperation in science and technology, opening up new vistas to experts in our two countries. Soviet and Indian scientists will not only do joint research and development work in many fields, but will also put the results of their efforts into industrial practice. Research organizations in the two countries are to carry out joint projects aimed at surpassing top world standards in one or another field.

We are aware of the magnitude of the task, the implementation of which, through pooling Soviet-Indian intellectual potential, will make it possible to gear the latest advances of science and technology to the ambitious social and economic objectives that the Soviet Union and India have set themselves. This joint endeavour is certain to further consolidate friendship and understanding between our two nations.

I visited India in January 1983 as chairman of the U.S.S.R. State Committee for Science and Technology, and was greatly impressed by the achievements of Indian scientists in physics, mathematics and atomic power engineering. I shall go there again soon at the invitation of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, and I shall certainly take this opportunity to learn more about what our Indian colleagues are doing and to help further to consolidate Soviet-Indian scientific cooperation.

More of the Saga

ALEXANDER PUMPYANSKY

Who is going to be the next president of the United States? A Republican or a Democrat? Senator Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts wants to see a computer in this post. Back in 1984 he suggested that the master computer of the U.S. Armed Forces control system be elected to wield top executive power in the country. His simple reasoning was that the computer would always be on the alert, at least.

A Computer-President

Consider this: an anti-ballistic missile system operates at speeds which effectively rule out a normal political process of decision-making in the vital matters of war and peace. The first (and final) word will rest with the computer rather than with legislators or even generals.

Humans are not equal to deciding their own fate. Modern war is too unpredictable and fast, and people are too slow-witted. For reasons of elementary efficiency, it is necessary to replace the human brain with artificial intelligence and automate military decision-making. It will be only too logical to go all the way to automatic control of strategic nuclear missiles.

These ideas come from the official project "Strategic Computing, New Generation Computing Technology: A Strategic Plan for Its Development and Application to Critical Problems of Defence" published by the Defence Department Advanced Research Projects Agency back in October 1983. The message of the project is that computing systems can largely, if not completely, replace men in making decisions qualified as "critical."

Frankly, the verbal combination "ar-

tificial intelligence" has always aroused mixed feelings in me; it makes me uncomfortable rather than happy about this obvious triumph of science (triumph over whom, incidentally?). The instinct for self-preservation probably manifests itself here. Robots will not enslave man, as the more lurid sci-fi stories predict; they will annihilate him. The "star wars" project, for instance, marks a step in this very direction.

The book "Weapons in Space: The Dilemma of Security," compiled under the auspices of the Soviet Scientists' Committee for Peace, Against Nuclear War Threat, lays bare the mechanism of this danger.

SDI may result in automatically triggering off a retaliatory nuclear strike "on an alarm signal." A computer may become president.... But the alarm could, as likely as not, prove a false one....

Will the SDI detection sub-system correctly identify an upward moving object? On what grounds will the decision to destroy it be made? How many channels of the systems should remain inoperative for such a decision to be called off? One? Two? Or more?

Speaking of software, experts are divided as to how many errors will inevitably find their way into the computer programme. Figures vary, but the probability of error must be zero because just one error will prove fatal.

The ABM combat control sub-system should be an enormous artificial-intelligence complex containing expert knowledge and capable of assessing the current military-political situation and forecasting likely trends in its development. But who is to feed the requisite criteria and basic data into the computer, and what kind of criteria and data are these going to be? "SDI is advocated, above all, by those representatives of U.S. military, scientific and

political circles who have the most negative, even paranoid, notions of the Soviet Union's intentions and are most prone to use armed force in conflict situations," the authors of the book point out. Is artificial intelligence paranoid? Or does it bring out, in its own way, the artificiality of this, political, brand of paranoia? No, if mankind is doomed to perish, there will be no one to call to account for this.

Nevertheless, it would be a shame to die as a result of somebody's foolishness.

Another headache besetting the advocates of SDI is: how are the elements of the proposed ABM system itself to be protected? Great hopes are pinned on the so-called "sovereignty zone" method whereby ABM facilities mounted on a space station will destroy any object coming within the "off-limits" zone around it. The deployment in outer space of an extensive ABM system protected by the above-named method will create vast mobile restricted areas around the earth. What if one of America's own, or some other country's, satellites—or just an unruly meteorite—gets into such a zone? There will be no reproaching Providence for what is likely to happen as a result.

The ABM Treaty and the Holy Grail

It was on the SDI issue that the Soviet side made perhaps the greatest concession in Reykjavik. Although opposed to the project in principle, the U.S.S.R. by no means demanded that it be scrapped as a price for the dismantling of Soviet heavy missiles. Instead, it suggested something far more modest: the strengthening of the Soviet-American ABM treaty. Since the treaty has become a crossroads of sorts, a point on which different positions and ambitions clash, it certainly pays to analyze its letter and spirit, its logic and its effect.

The ABM treaty, i.e., the treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems—was signed in 1972. On the American side its chief architects were the then President Richard Nixon and his Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The most important pledge it contains is: "Each party undertakes not to deploy ABM systems for defence of the territory of its country and not to provide a base for such a defence." (Article 1, point 2).

If an ABM system defending a country's territory is not to be set up, then what provisions is each side entitled to make against a ballistic mis-

See "Saga of a Myth" in our previous issue.

sile attack? The 1974 protocol allowed each side no more than one ABM system deployment area, with a definite number of launching complexes, ABMs, etc., in it. The Soviet side decided to set up such an area around Moscow with its ten-million-strong population, and the American side selected Grand Forks with its missile silos. The choice was up to each party.

Banning defence? What kind of strange, "amoral" (to use President Reagan's own metaphor) logic did the makers of the treaty go by?

The object of the treaty was to impose limitations not only on strategic defence, but on strategic offensive systems as well. At the same time it got the SALT process under way. Touched off by the Interim Agreement on Certain Measures with Respect to the Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (SALT-1), it was to have been carried forward by SALT-2, SALT-3, and so on.

The interconnection between strategic offensive and defensive arms was admitted—a sober and realistic view of cardinal importance. (Later, when discussing SDI, Academician Roald Sagdeyev, the distinguished space researcher, asked a simple question by way of comparison: is thickening a tank's armour a defensive or an offensive measure?) Given a nuclear-missile "sword," the creation of a "shield" puts the other side in greater danger (or at least makes it feel less secure) and provokes the latter either to create a shield of its own, or to reinforce its sword, or to do both.

The proposal to agree on remaining mutually unprotected from a nuclear-missile strike was a move of rare intellectual and political courage. Common sense and a wariness evolved through millennia of fighting protested against it. New realities, however, prompted just such decision.

Winning a nuclear-missile war is impossible, but preventing it is. This is not a moral issue. Even a superpower cannot parry a strike and remain intact. The ABM treaty is a legal recognition of this irrefutable and truly horrible reality. Only nuclear disarmament (conceived as the objective of the SALT process), and not attempts to take refuge behind a shield, will restore to mankind the sense of security it has lost.

The ABM treaty contains another courageous, albeit extremely sad, admission to the effect that the arms race has got out of control and we are no longer able to cope with it. Granting that the two sides can at present neither put an end to their antagonism nor stop the arms race, they might at least set a limit to it. Let the agreement on the non-establishment of a nationwide ABM

system be such a limit, the two powers decided in a rare moment of like thinking. Within the framework of this agreement, they hoped to curb the arms race and drive the genie back into its bottle. Such was the logic of the Soviet-American accord in the early 1970s.

These hopes failed to materialize. The SALT process skidded to a halt, through no fault of its own, but through the fault of the Americans, who went back on it and mounted fierce attacks on SALT-2. Yet, neither the nature of the threat nor the gist of the joint conclusions once arrived at has changed.

In attacking the ABM treaty, President Reagan is playing to the gallery rather than displaying statesmanship.

It looks as if the treaty has become a pet butt for the President's jokes. One of them was top-level (in the sense that the President cracked it at the Reykjavik summit). "Now the ABM treaty which he [Gorbachev] kept referring to as if it was the Holy Grail," the President retold it later. "I asked him once what was so great about a treaty that had our governments saying to our people, we won't protect you from a nuclear attack?"

(Incidentally, Mikhail Gorbachev's reply was: "Well, what do you suggest a treaty should be regarded as? A scrap of paper?")

The paramount importance of the treaty lies in that it constitutes the last barrier in the way of an unbridled nuclear-missile and new-generation arms race.

Although not made in heaven, like marriages, international agreements ought nevertheless to be observed; had it been otherwise, even whatever order there is on earth would have long ago given way to chaos. This is as familiar as the Paternoster to all those who know the difference between "pacta sunt servanda" and "persona non grata".

SALT-2: "Pact Non Grata"

The Reagan Administration can rightly take the credit for having enriched international law with a new concept, "treaty non grata." The other day it sacrificed the SALT-2 treaty to its 131st B-52 bomber.

A B-52 carries 12 airborne cruise missiles, and 130 B-52s therefore carry 1,560 such missiles. Each cruise missile's warhead has a yield 15 times as great as the Hiroshima A-bomb. Between them, 130 B-52 bombers pack 100 times more destructive power per mis-

sion than all the bombs dropped by the combined allied air force throughout World War II. This, however, proved insufficient. In a situation where the U.S. strategic air force exceeds that of the Soviet Union by nearly four to one, the U.S. decided it was in its national security interests to launch another, 131st bomber, which flew beyond the SALT-2 limits and smashed them. This urgent, irrepressible need arose after Reykjavik where the two leaders had all but reached an agreement on a 50-per-cent reduction of all strategic systems in five years, and their elimination within a decade from now.

This is how the Reagan Administration deals with international treaties. Under the circumstances, the restraint of the U.S.S.R., which has announced it will nonetheless not exceed the limits of SALT-2, is of special value.

But let us return to the ABM treaty.

Is SDI in conformity with the provisions of the ABM treaty? It is not. It is in direct contradiction with Article I, which bans the deployment of nationwide ABM systems. It is incompatible with Article V, which says: "Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based."

Execution on the Sly

This clause is a fine example of how unambiguous the treaty's provisions are—but not to American pettifoggers who have managed to find (reportedly on the instructions of Richard Perle himself, who takes special delight in torpedoing agreements) a vague line, albeit not in the treaty proper, but in one of the statements annexed to it by the signatories. In Statement D, to be specific. This statement, the authors of the sensational discovery enthuse, permits the development and all but the deployment of ABM systems functioning on new (laser, particle-beam and other) principles.

Does this mean that SDI is a legitimate child? Not at all. V. Vereshchagin, LL.D., vice-president of the International Institute of Space Law, explains: Statement D does allow for the advent of ABMs functioning on new physical principles but stipulates that they be deployed exclusively in the ABM areas specified by the treaty and on stationary ground-based rather than on orbital or any other complexes.

Still, what meaning did the authors of the treaty attach to its complex formulae? Gerard Smith, the chief U.S. negotiator of the ABM treaty, and John Rhinelander, legal adviser to it, objec-

NICARAGUA

Invasion Rehearsal

● ON DECEMBER 7 U.S. PLANES RAIDED NORTHERN NICARAGUA FROM HONDURAN TERRITORY.

Bombs were dropped on the positions of a Sandinist People's Army brigade and on a settlement situated a long distance from the frontier. There were killed and wounded, including children.

At a press conference in

Managua, Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto directly charged the U.S. with attempting to provoke an armed conflict between Nicaragua and Honduras that would serve as a pretext for escalating the American aggression against the Sandinist revolution.

There are weighty grounds for such accusations. Ever since mid-November there has been a menacing concentration of U.S. warships off the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. Stationed within 100 kilometres of Puerto Cabezas and targeted on important economic and military installations, they include an aircraft carrier and five warships,

in particular Tomahawk-carrying destroyers. All these vessels are equipped with electronic reconnaissance devices.

In Honduras, air bases capable of receiving both combat and heavy transport aircraft have been put on the alert. In the frontier province of El Paraiso U.S. troops have begun to be moved towards the border. Military equipment is being transported along the road leading to Danli. The U.S. embassy in Tegucigalpa hastened to explain that all this activity was connected with the current joint American-Honduran manoeuvres.

Diverse counterrevolutionary organizations belonging to the so-called Opposition Nicaraguan Alliance funded by Washington met in late November in Costa Rica to discuss armed action against the Sandinist authorities and the setting up of a "provisional government of Nicaragua."

Along with intensified preparations for invasion, Washington is stepping up political soundings. In particular, it is trying to induce its Central American partners—Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala—to break off all

relations with Nicaragua. To this end, President Reagan's special envoy Philip Habib has made another tour of the region, and CIA director William Casey visited San Salvador, where he agreed with the local brass hats that El Salvador would continue to serve as a base of operations for aggression against the Sandinist republic.

The signs are that the bombing of northern Nicaragua was only a trial of strength. The New York Times reported that on instructions from President Reagan, American helicopters have been airlifting hundreds of Honduran soldiers from an air base in that country to the Nicaraguan border in preparation for hostilities against the Sandinist People's Army.

The present U.S. Administration, bent on overthrowing the Sandinist government and putting its puppets in power, is again flexing its muscles. Hence the heightened vigilance on the part of Nicaragua. Its people are ready to defend the sovereignty and independence of their republic.

V. DOLGOV

our own correspondent
Managua



ted to a "loose" or "liberal" interpretation of the treaty.

In an attempt to silence critical voices, Secretary of State Shultz said the U.S. would stick to the "narrow" interpretation of the treaty for the time being, but reserved the right to change over to a "broader" one. The "for the time being" part of this statement beats everything. Mr Shultz seems to regard international treaties as something like a pair of slippers which can be either worn, or pushed under the sofa.

SDI's supporters have also found a loophole in the treaty. After all, they say, the treaty is of unlimited duration, and each party is entitled to withdraw from it at half a year's notice. The obvious implication is that the right to withdraw from the treaty spares the U.S. the trouble of observing it, and makes every minute of keeping it formally valid a favour to the partner. But the point is that it is an agreement of un-

limited duration. And the right to withdraw from it is not the right to do so at will. To quote Article XV, each party shall have this right if [it decides that] "extraordinary events related to the subject matter of this Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests." No such events are in evidence today, but a new obsession with the "star wars" idea is.

In Reykjavik the two sides agreed to keep the treaty alive for a decade. President Reagan considers this a tremendous concession on his part. However, each side put its own construction on this figure. The Soviet Union hopes that the Reykjavik agreement will see the ABM treaty through the period required to dismantle strategic systems, whereupon the very need for ABM defence will obviate itself, and the temptation to undermine the treaty will pass. As for the U.S., it hopes the treaty will lose force in ten years from now, and that upon the expiry of this

period it will be free to deploy an ABM system in space.

It is like passing sentence today and executing it ten years later. Or, more precisely, executing it today and announcing the execution in ten years' time, because in exchange for a formal recognition of the treaty the Americans demand that all the prohibitive clauses be rescinded, and that restrictions on all tests (in space included) be lifted, which spells an immediate end to the treaty.

Although the ABM treaty is not the Holy Grail, smashing it would be a lightminded and dangerous act.

Even by the logic of SDI enthusiasts, abandoning the A-bomb would take a minimum of 70 times the expenses involved in creating it. So how much more will it cost the United States to disentangle itself from the "star wars" venture, considering the incredible price of getting embroiled in it?

FRANCE

Government Backs Down

● IN HIS TELEVISION APPEARANCE ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 8, FRENCH PREMIER JACQUES CHIRAC SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS WITHDRAWING THE PROPOSED DEVAQUET BILL WHICH HAD SPARKED STUDENT UNREST IN PARIS, LYONS, BORDEAUX, MARSEILLE AND ELSEWHERE.

The latest developments reminded many of the May 1968 student demonstrations which, backed by working-class action, resulted in the Fifth Republic's gravest ever political crisis and forced President de Gaulle to resign.

To what extent is this parallel valid? Can the winter of 1986 be compared with the spring of 1968? Though the parallel may seem exaggerated, there are several points of resemblance.

Now, as eighteen years ago, the young people were definitely peaceful, even apolitical at first. On some campuses students debated what they could expect if the Chirac administration's proposed university reform—known as the Devaquet Bill after its author, Alain Devaquet, Minister Delegate for research and higher education attached to the Minister of National Education—were to be carried out.

The prospect was bleak. The reform would place additional difficulties in the way of those seeking an education. Students would be admitted according to the ability of their parents to pay the fees (working-class children already comprise a mere 13 per cent of the student body). The way would be open for the privatization of higher education with all the ensuing negative con-

sequences. The standing of different universities would in effect become unequal.

On Thursday, December 4, a column of more than a million young people marched through Paris. There were smiling faces, songs and chanted slogans, and all in virtually cloudless spring-like sunshine. School and university students from all over France wanted the Devaquet Bill shelved.

Suddenly the police hurled tear gas grenades into the mass of students. One had a hand torn off, another his eye gouged out, a third was rushed to hospital with a fractured skull. Club-swinging police lunged at the throng. Brutally beaten Malik Oussekine, 22, died later in hospital.

The government had relied on force. However, police reprisals only provoked surging indignation. Malik's tragic death generated a wave of disgust.

In the Latin Quarter, where there are several universities, barricades of bricks, lumber and overturned cars were thrown up.

At this point, again as in 1968, extremists rushed in to set fire to cars, smash shop-windows, loot, plunder and vandalize.

Additional fuel was added to the flames when the mass media claimed that the unrest in the Latin Quarter and the scuffles with the police had been masterminded by people quite unconnected with the student movement.

A TF 1 cameraman shot an incident at night showing a police cordon letting through members of an extreme right-wing youth organization, wearing crash helmets and

swinging crowbars. Later, the TV reporter who had been on the scene said he had seen these young men in clashes with the police after the demonstration had ended.

"Why did the police look on calmly for hours at cars being set ablaze and shop-windows being looted on Boulevard Saint-Michel?" one woman who had witnessed the disturbances asked, her voice trembling. "Why did they attack a peaceful student demonstration?"

"These thugs have nothing at all to do with us," a student activist said in front of an Antenne 2 TV camera. "This is just an attempt to discredit our movement."

On the one hand, the rioting thus provoked alarms the man-in-the-street and, on the other, it justifies repressive action by the government. Small wonder that at the emergency convention of the Alliance for the Republic, which heads the government majority, calls to "defend democracy" were made, "professional provocateurs" threatened, and "the enforcement of law and order" was promised. It was by no means fortuitous that right-wing newspapers described the clashes and disturbances in such lurid terms, and front-paged pictures of burnt-out cars, as if to show what the students were capable of doing.

However, the student movement at once dissociated itself from the provocateurs. Its coordinating committee appealed to the public and the trade unions for support. The spontaneous protest rapidly became politicized.

Progressives responded en masse. Student protest was now the focus for a growing

Student demonstration in Paris.

TASS photo



mass movement reflecting general discontent with the present situation. Increasing numbers of strikes and the dissatisfaction with government reforms voiced by various strata of working people, from civil servants to medical personnel, serve to alter the prevailing atmosphere.

The turbulent events of May 1968, which instilled great fear into the French ruling classes, had followed the same pattern. Evidently mindful of this the government decided to avert a crisis and quickly retreated withdrawing the Devaquet Bill.

N. YERMAKOV
TASS correspondent
for New Times

Paris

alternative to the policy of co-operation and interaction between states on the basis of equality, with respect for the sovereign right of every nation to choose the path and forms of its development.

The resolution provides for the further examination of this question at the 42nd U.N. General Assembly. The representatives of the United States and some of its allies objected violently to this point.

A number of other documents adopted by the General Assembly are closely linked with this resolution, including the resolutions on bilateral negotiations on nuclear arms and on international cooperation for disarmament. The General Assembly urged the governments of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. to hold bilateral talks and make a determined effort to reach agreement on concrete and effective measures to end the nuclear arms race, radically reduce nuclear arsenals, work for nuclear disarmament and to prevent the arms race from spilling over into outer space. Complete security for all countries can be achieved only by political means, the resolutions stressed.

Characteristic in this connection is the position taken by the United States, whose representative 43 times abstained or voted against resolutions aimed at improving the international climate. On 11 occasions he did so in complete isolation. The French delegate alone supported the U.S. delegate who voted against the resolution on the establishment of a comprehensive system of international peace and security.

E. ANDRIANOV

U.S.S.R.—JAPAN

Round-Table Conference

● THE FIFTH SOVIET-JAPANESE NONGOVERNMENTAL ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE WAS HELD RECENTLY IN TOKYO.

In relations between states, as in men's lives, there are "good" and "not so good" years. For the U.S.S.R. and Japan, the year now ending could be called a "good" year. It was the 30th anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries and, as if in honour of the event, 1986 witnessed some positive developments. There was the exchange of visits by Japanese and Soviet foreign ministers, the signing of an agreement on cultural contacts and several trade and economic accords and the trip to Moscow of a representative delegation of Japanese businessmen to attend an economic conference.

The Soviet government announced its principled decision to explore every avenue for promoting relations with Japan regardless of her ties with other countries.

Business circles in Japan are following with interest the restructuring of the national economy under way in the U.S.S.R. The headway made by Japan's economy prompts that country to pursue a more independent and constructive policy in world affairs. And this, it is conceded in Tokyo, is impossible without stable relations with the Soviet Union.

The participants in the fifth round table, held early in December, made its contribution to improving the political climate. The role of public opinion in overcoming harmful stereotyped thinking and prejudice was discussed in an interview your correspondent had with some of those who had taken part in the round table.

"When we met at the first round-table conference in 1979 the number of participants on each side could be counted on the fingers of one hand," Shoichi Yokokawa, chairman of the Japanese-Soviet trade association, told me. "The relations between our two countries were cool and we hoped to preserve whatever warmth there was. By the time of the fourth meeting, the Japanese government had begun to show signs of being interested in improving relations with the U.S.S.R. On this occasion the meeting was addressed by Foreign Minister Tadashi Kuranari. Prime Minister Nakasone sent a message of greeting and received the head of the Soviet delegation. I believe that the public of both countries have made an effective contribution to the historical process of bringing the U.S.S.R. and Japan closer together."

Georgi Kim, corresponding member of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, had this to say:

"When regional or bilateral relations deteriorate there is a need for forums where it would be possible on an official or unofficial level to search for compromises and to prepare the ground thoroughly for positive action. That is the purpose served by the round tables. In our time public opinion can do much to impart to official agreements a living content of human, business, academic and cultural contacts. We want to promote relations without any conditions, on an equal footing, on the premise that the U.S.S.R. and Japan are sovereign powers on whom the stability not only of the Pacific region but of the whole world depends. Therefore, in our joint communiqué we called for a search for new forms of cooperation in the trade and economic sphere and for safeguarding peace and security in the Asian and Pacific region."

Our own correspondent

Tokyo

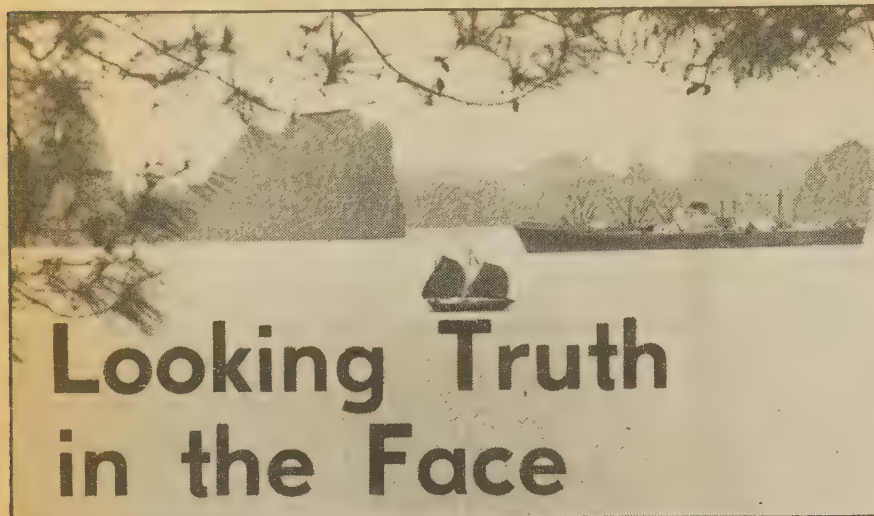
U.N.

Equal Security for All

● THE 41st SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY A RESOLUTION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY.

The global, truly all-embracing character of the draft resolution submitted by a group of socialist countries, including the Soviet Union, won it a high appraisal already during the discussion in the First Committee. It provides for equal security for all states and in all spheres—military, political, economic and humanitarian.

In the modern world, it says, there is no rational al-



Looking Truth in the Face

That has been the keynote as Vietnam's Communists
have prepared for their sixth party congress

Although you have heard and read that Hanoi with its three million people has a million bicycles, you cannot help feeling awed when faced with the need to cross a river of bicycles flowing along thoroughfares, streets and bystreets.

A River of Bicycles

You become aware of the power of this flood. You pause on the pavement, plucking up courage before taking the plunge. A young lad pedals away energetically. Overtaking three girls casually chatting as they ride along, he casts a quick look at them. An elderly man turns the pedals with effort: his bicycle is laden with baskets of fruit and vegetables. You can see a whole family riding on one bicycle: the father in the saddle, the mother on the luggage rack, and two children sandwiched between them. Two children is considered the ideal size for a family today. Among the cyclists are people in overalls, army uniforms, and in business suits. A smartly dressed woman in high heels turns the pedals with dignity. Another woman cyclist is giving a lift to a friend who is clutching a child to her body with one hand and holding an open book in the other. Towering over this stream of bicycles are the rickshaws with their high saddles. From time to time whirlpools form at intersections, most of which

have no traffic control. Every now and then you run into snags as the stream of bicycles flows around pedestrians, who can cross the street wherever they want to. You realize that all the pedestrian needs to be safe is to move calmly and at an even pace. There is perfect understanding between cyclists and pedestrians. The cyclists are unperturbed by the demanding hoot of an occasional car horn. Driving without a horn is almost as futile as trying to drive with a faulty engine.

Asked about my first impressions, I tell my Vietnamese acquaintance about the river of bicycles, adding that bicycles are becoming more and more popular in my country, too, especially in some cities on the Baltic. They reduce air pollution and give people exercise.

Here, we do not see it primarily as exercise, says Le Xuan Dong, deputy head of the propaganda department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam. The sea of bicycles reflects our problems, the shortage of transport, fuel, and so on.

Difficult Times

I visited Vietnam at a very interesting time. Party conferences had just finished, and the Central Committee was meeting in plenary session. It had announced the date of the sixth congress of the Vietnamese Communist Party—

December 15. Preparations for that milestone event were keyed by the motto: "Speak the truth and face the truth." Comrade Dong is totally frank with me in his replies to my questions on the problems facing his country.

Speaking of the causes of the current difficulties, he says that the country started building socialism from a very low level: it had a backward agrarian economy and home-made industries. "Industries are running at half capacity, there is a shortage of energy and raw and other materials," Le Xuan Dong continued. "We are also aware of a shortage of cultivated land: we have just a thousand square metres per head of the population. The countryside is not getting enough fertilizer or farm machinery and for its part is unable to fully meet industry's demand for raw materials. We often have to have power cuts in the capital when air fans and conditioners come to a standstill in 35°C heat. We have a difficult climate: sometimes showers bring a thousand millimetres of precipitation within a couple of days and power is diverted from the towns to combat floods. We are short of metal: we have about 10 kilogrammes per capita, including imported metal.

"Vietnam," stressed Le Xuan Dong, "has great power resources which have only been partially tapped. A number of hydroelectric power stations are being built. We have considerable stocks of coal, oil and gas. The Vietnamese-Soviet enterprise in Vung Tau in the south of the country is already starting to produce oil. But it is unlikely to reach full capacity for several years. Here, as in other cases, however, we believe that our rich natural resources and fruitful cooperation with the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries will be beneficial. We have a great deal of manpower but insufficient labour implements and technology. Some people are jobless.

"Perhaps no other country has had to wage war over three decades. And even in the last decade we have not enjoyed real peace. Vietnamese citizens are still shedding their blood on the northern border, fulfilling their internationalist duty in Kampuchea. Losses since 1975 have exceeded those in the nine-year war of resistance against the French colonialists. Upholding our independence is still a key strategic task.

"We are building socialism, bypassing the capitalist stage of development," said Le Xuan Dong. "This is

fraught with many difficulties. One difficulty is that the country consists of two parts with different socio-economic setups. In the North the system of socialist relations had been established by 1975, while the South lived under capitalism. These systems mutually influence each other. Today there are three economic patterns in the North: state, cooperative and private (small commodity). In the South, there are state, state-capitalist, cooperative, capitalist (small enterprises) and private (small commodity) patterns. We try to differentiate our policy with regard to each of these economic entities. It is clear, however, that uniting the two parts of the country is easier than assimilating them into a single economic organism.

"During the two five-year periods between 1976 and 1985," said Le Xuan Dong, "the country made some progress in building socialism, especially in the last five years when the gross national product grew at a rate of 7.6 per cent a year (compared with 1.4 per cent in the preceding five years). While in 1980 we produced 14.4 million tons of food (measured in rice equivalent), the figure was 18.2 million tons in 1985. Industrial output grew by 9.5 per cent a year over the last five-year period compared to 0.6 per cent in the preceding five years. But progress could have been more rapid if we hadn't made some mistakes. These miscalculations have been thoroughly examined in the run-up to the sixth congress. We have faced up to the truth, as they are now doing in the Soviet Union," stressed comrade Dong. "We have discovered that many of our difficulties had subjective causes."

Changing the Thinking

Errors in economic management were frankly exposed and discussed by Truong Chinh, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, and President of the Council of State, at a conference of Communists in Hanoi.

"In the past," he said, "we have concentrated attention on heavy industry, which the country could ill afford. Our drawback is a heavy superstructure and a weak base, and our wish to reconstruct quickly and completely by rapidly eliminating non-socialist elements in the economy. On the one hand, we have acted subjectively and with haste, skipping necessary stages of development in our eagerness to accomplish too much. On the other, we lacked the courage and determination to rectify our mistakes."

"These became a brake on production, lowering labour productivity and the efficiency and quality of our work," said the General Secretary. "We have

not been making effective use of our potential, or the assistance of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. We have not been fully using our land and labour resources, the material and technical base, the experience available in all branches of the economy and all regions, and the potential of the working people. This has led to negative phenomena, traditional human values have been shaken, and there has been a prolonged period of social and economic stagnation. Faith in the party's leadership has been weakened. If we are to find a way out of this dangerous situation we need to change our thinking, style of work and approach to organizational and personnel matters. The sixth congress faces the challenge of altering consciousness and on this basis achieving shifts in the economic structure, reorganizing our administrative mechanism so as to release the existing production potential and utilize the country's reserves to boost the productive forces," stressed Truong Chinh. "To implement these strategic measures, it is necessary to link the development of productive forces with faster socialist reform and constantly address ourselves to this task throughout the transitional period."

The country has been preparing for the party congress for a long time. People link their hopes with this important event, as I was told by various people who invariably expressed thanks for the selfless assistance of the Soviet Union and spoke highly of the decisions of the 27th Congress of the CPSU. I was told this in a cooperative in a southern province, in editorial offices and at the construction site of a major hydroengineering project... People avidly read the newspapers, which have a great deal to say about unresolved problems and everything that impedes progress. People see that words are already being matched by concrete actions aimed at raising their living standards. Near Ho Chi Minh, the country's largest city, construction of the Tri An hydroelectric complex is proceeding apace. The complex will make up for the shortage of electricity in Ho Chi Minh (where there are power cuts twice a week in some districts), ensure smoother operation of industry, and thus alleviate the problem of unemployment. Energy will make it possible to implement large-scale irrigation schemes and consequently boost food production.

Another Battle

The country faces a number of economic, political, social and psychological problems. It is determined to face these problems squarely. The Vietnamese are noted for their tenacity.

This was brought home to me again when I visited Cu Chi Province, several dozen kilometres from Ho Chi Minh.

A jungle path leads to a roof of reed leaves lying on the ground. Underneath is a hatch with steps leading downward. Crouching, I squeezed myself through a metre-high arc (this, as I was to find out, is as big a hatch as they make here). On my way up I, nevertheless, banged my head on the ceiling. A short passage leads into a hall of about thirty square metres where you can stand to your full height. During the war against U.S. aggressors and their South Vietnamese puppets this dugout served as the office of the secretary of the underground city party committee. A hatch in the floor leads into passage and there is another hatch in the wall.

These trenches, 60 centimetres wide, were usually made 3-4 metres deep and some as deep as 7 metres. One must remember that this labyrinth was being built in enemy territory.

How many kilometres of such trenches can be dug in these conditions? One? Ten? They dug almost 300 kilometres, not to mention the "halls" and the kitchen. Speaking of the kitchen, the cook hit on a clever way of channelling smoke through conduits and dispersing it over a large area to make it look like ordinary fog and not smoke, which would have instantly invited an air raid.

The guerrillas wore down and frustrated the enemy with their stinging strikes. "Did the enemy manage to locate the entrance to the underground town?" I asked Nguyen Van Thanh, who was a liaison officer with the guerrillas during the war. On one occasion the Americans discovered the entrance, he said. They sent a large group of commandos who used gas, water and napalm. Still, the GIs were unable to force their way in.

Nor could the invaders keep constant control of the rebel zone at Saigon's doorstep. This despite the fact that they bombed the Vietnamese almost every day, especially from helicopters. The Vietnamese patriots stood their ground. And the time came when they joined the troops moving from the North to rout the enemy.

I have great faith in these people, who are strong in spirit and body. I am sure they have enough strength to win the battle against such enemies as red tape, incompetence, economic mismanagement, conservatism and social apathy. The goals to be set by the sixth congress of the CPV will be achieved. A visit to Cu Chi convinces one of this.

V. ZHITOMIRSKY
our special correspondent

Hanoi—Ho Chi Minh—Moscow

After the Reagan team came to power, big business intensified its attacks on the people's social gains.

That is why today the United States has

Fifty Million Outcasts

In the 1980s, federal social policy has often been compared to a surgical operation because of the relentless amputation of public spending by the Administration. Even Senator Pete Domenici, an active Reagan supporter, called this butchery of social programmes the most dramatic in U.S. history.

Medicare, an aid programme for the aged, has been slashed by \$1.4 billion, and the same amount has been hacked from the unemployment benefit fund. A total of 875,000 Americans have been denied food coupons. The funding of 310,000 jobs has been stopped with the same number actually joining the registered unemployed. Some three million children no longer get free breakfasts at school, and 700,000 poor families have been deprived of allowances. As well as the big cuts mentioned above, many small cuts have been made. In all, 250 programmes have been curtailed. Between 1981 and 1986 some \$467 billion were to have been lopped off public spending. For reasons beyond the Administration's control, this target has not been achieved, but the volume of the proposed reduction is impressive indeed.

A Fierce Onslaught

The working people are not only being robbed. Their political rights are being trampled. Compared with other postwar administrations, the Reagan team has adopted the toughest stand with regard to the demands and needs of the lower strata. Some dialogue was maintained between the White House and the masses in the past, and the latter were at times able to get their demands fulfilled. But today trade unions, black organizations and associations of farmers with low incomes find it useless to try to establish contact with the authorities because they will not be listened to.

The suppression of the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization in 1981 may be recalled here. The union was disbanded for calling a strike, a police measure never previously applied. In addition, many of its members were forbidden to work in the federal service in the future, an utterly inhuman ban considering that air traffic controllers can only be employed in the federal service. In subsequent years the government has on several occasions taken repressive measures against trade unions.

Or consider deregulation. It has hurt the ordinary American more than the numerous cuts in benefits. The White House has abolished thousands of rules concerning labour and environment protection, and control of the quality of food products. Some 110 rules have been abrogated only in the field of safety measures and health protection for workers and people living near industrial plants. Losses in the event of an accident cannot be measured in terms of money alone.

Mention should also be made of the "new federalism," a project envisaging the transfer of many social aid programmes from federal to state level where there are considerably more modest resources.

What is the social purpose of the Republican policy?

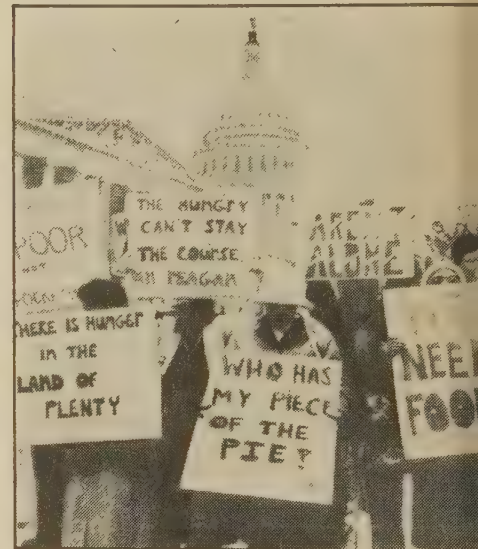
It would be a serious mistake to represent the Reagan Administration's policy as a direct and crude onslaught. The Republican policy is crude, of course, but it is also a cunning policy pursued by astute tacticians.

The Aim—to Intimidate and Isolate

From the very outset the aim of the onslaught on working people's rights has been to make social policy serve the new economic course, that is, to

fight economic ills with a drastic restriction rather than an increase in state regulation, with the market mechanism as a recipe. As soon as the Republicans came to power, they set about restructuring economic policy along these lines.

It is in place to recall that the United States began to abandon market self-regulation as far back as the 1930s, and for fairly substantial reasons. Firstly, reliance on the market failed to avert the great depression of those years and, secondly, it became clear then that the free play of market forces could lead to political upheavals dangerous to the system, and this is what the establishment wished on no account to allow. It was also in the 1930s that the United States began to introduce state re-



"Social revenge" in action.

From the People's Daily World (U.S.A.)

gulation of the economy on a wide scale.

The current return to market self-regulation calls for a tough social policy. The close link between them helps us understand many aspects of the Reagan Administration's policy.

The social consequences of economic self-regulation are incalculable misfortunes for working people. The crisis is wearing off very slowly because the government does little to stimulate the economy. It does not create new jobs and does not increase benefits. Increasing numbers of people find themselves in dire straits. The tough class policy is designed to intimidate the working people and reduce their resistance to a minimum. The Reagan Administration

has succeeded for the most part in this respect.

In the early 1980s, the condition of the working people deteriorated though the slump in business activity was not great. The jobless rate was the highest for the last half century, while the wage cut was the most drastic in postwar years. It might have seemed that a storm of mass protest would erupt. Protest did follow, but it was not vigorous enough.

Many sections of the working people were not ready at the time to uphold their rights and, moreover, they underestimated the new policy of the White House, which can be described as social revenge. It was to all intents and purposes a massive attack by the capitalists along the entire front of the class struggle.

The Reagan Administration had a clear understanding of where to deliver blows to make the working people retreat. It decided to reduce the level of social security, compel the blacks to put up with renewed discrimination in some fields (primarily in employment), undermine the trade union movement so that it would no longer be a serious factor in labour relations, weaken legislative protection of working people's interests, and suppress the militant spirit of the masses by complicating as much as possible the activity and very existence of various democratic organizations.

All this explains the numerous attempts of the Reagan Administration to cut public spending, its efforts to enact tougher laws against trade unions, the deliberate weakening of government control over the observance of anti-discrimination laws, support of big business by arbitration and conciliation bodies, and repressive measures against progressive individuals and organizations.

The White House is openly hostile to the poor. It is not clear at first sight why the government needs such a reputation. For the Republicans will have to contest not a few elections in the future. Previous administrations were not friends of the poor either. But for political considerations they strove to enlist the support of these sections of the population. The current Administration does not seem to trouble about that.

Social Polarization

A closer examination will nevertheless reveal quite a definite purpose here. The aim of the crusade against the poor is to put up a blank wall of indifference between them and the rest of society, to establish a division between the poor and relatively well-to-

do strata of the population, and weaken their solidarity and interaction.

The amputation of public spending was conceived in such a way that the poor would suffer from it much more than reasonably well paid sectors. The different consequences of this policy caused different reactions to it. Disagreement between the two categories of working people in their attitudes to the government arose.

Or take another example—the cuts in income tax. Taxpayers with medium incomes gained something from this measure, whereas the poor gained virtually nothing. The different consequences led, again, to the same political effect. The "new federalism" project is also designed to cause the greatest damage to the poor, with minor benefits for other sectors—to drive one more wedge between them.

One and the same socially Darwinist idea, though worded differently, is being inculcated in the minds of the general public. The poor themselves are to blame for their plight, it says. They are to be found in any society. The poor are those who do not work diligently, are lazy, lack enterprise and talent. Among them are tramps, drug addicts and drunkards. Therefore, it is not only needless but even harmful to help them, for no help will do them good. It will merely increase the army of social parasites. Not satisfaction of their demands but cruelty—either work or die of hunger—can help the poor. In other words, fewer benefits and less sympathy with the needy.

By the 1980s the indignation of middle-class Americans at the tax burden had reached boiling point. It should be said that the new right skillfully used this irritation in their propaganda. "Your taxes feed the indolent" was the slogan put forward by neo-conservatives, and the man in the street, often himself a worker, believed it. The poor, now with less support from the public, were unable to rise to a decisive struggle. As a result of the split, working people at large also found it more difficult to resist the pressure put on them.

Something else has come to light as well. Social polarization has grown wider and deeper. At present, 33 million Americans are officially regarded as living below the poverty line. In the opinion of the distinguished researcher Michael Harrington, at least 20 million more people, not registered officially, can be added to them.

There are thus some 50 million outcasts in the United States, a figure registered in the country 15-20 years ago. For as long as Reaganomics worked, the ruling elite could cherish the hope that its cunning policy would not allow the social time bomb to go off. But what will happen when economic recovery is followed by crisis?

Y. OLESHCHUK

APPOINTMENTS

Boris Ivanovich MINAKOV

Ambassador of the U.S.S.R. to Côte d'Ivoire

Boris Minakov, a Russian, was born on July 15, 1928, in the village of Nizhnedevitsk, Voronezh Region. In 1950 he graduated from the Moscow Institute of International Relations. He has been a member of the CPSU since 1953.

In 1950-52, after finishing the institute, he worked in the consular department of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry, and in 1952-55, at the Soviet embassy in Romania. In 1955-59 he



was attaché and third secretary of the fifth European department of the Foreign Ministry, and in 1959-62, second secretary of the Soviet embassy in Greece.

In 1962-64 he again worked in the Foreign Ministry's head office as second secretary of the second African department and second secretary of the personnel department. In 1964-70 he was first secretary and counsellor of the Soviet embassy in Romania. Between 1970 and 1976 he held the post of referent at a department of the CPSU Central Committee, in 1976-81, of counsellor-envoy of the Soviet embassy in Romania, and from 1981 to 1986 was deputy head of the fifth European department of the Foreign Ministry.

Boris Minakov has been awarded a number of government decorations.

Joint Ventures— What They Will Be Like

GENRIKH BAZHENOV

Many believe that the way to enhance the effectiveness of our foreign trade is to increase Soviet export potential while making rational use of imported resources. This is true in principle. Nevertheless, for all the importance of foreign trade in dealing with individual economic problems, this traditional vehicle for international exchanges can hardly be expected to realize our full potential as a partner in the international division of labour—least of all today when this division has taken the form of specialized and joint production of high-technology items.

A mere expansion of commodity turnover, no matter how well balanced its structure may be, is insufficient because it presupposes a predominantly quantitative growth in foreign trade. It is only new-type international economic links, supplementing foreign trade, that can impart a new quality to international commerce and make it of greater benefit to the national economy. This is provided for by the resolution on the radical improvement of these links recently adopted by the CPSU Central Committee and the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. The resolution lists drastic measures to be taken to restructure the management and organization of foreign trade. A much wider range of factories, organizations and institutions will be drawn into it than was previously the case. As of January 1987, 21 ministries and departments and 70 major amalgamations and industrial plants will be authorized to conduct export and import transactions independently, not only with CMEA member countries, but on the markets of capitalist and developing countries too.

As well as direct trade links, the resolution provides for another promising form of East-West business cooperation—namely, the setting up of joint companies, with both the U.S.S.R. and foreign firms having an interest in them.

Referred to as "joint ventures" in East-West business practice, these com-

panies are engaged in coproduction and joint marketing. They first appeared on the scene about fifteen years ago—initially in the European socialist countries and later in the People's Republic of China. This form of international economic cooperation differs from foreign trade in that a joint venture emphasizes East-West partnership in commodity production rather than in commodity exchange. This also distinguishes joint ventures from such forms of international economic cooperation as granting concessions to foreign companies, commissioning them to build factories and other installations on "turn-key terms," or negotiating pay-back deals under which such installations remain the property of the importing country.

A joint venture presupposes the pooling of production facilities, the preparedness of both partners to take business risks, and their dependence on the scale of production and the level of efficiency for profit. Furthermore, a joint venture means joint product quality inspection and the continuous modernization of production processes.

Many problems (some of them fairly serious) associated with the promotion of joint ventures remain to be resolved, although some CMEA member states have already acquired some experience of this kind of partnership. Nevertheless, the legal and organizational aspects of joint ventures are likely to be formalized before this year is out. At any rate, clear-cut guidelines for their activities have already been drawn up.

Working Models

In the early stages, joint ventures will be small production complexes of the working model kind, at which the mechanism of joint activity can be tuned up at a minimum risk to either partner. The fixed assets of joint enterprises will be accumulated on the basis of joint-stock capital, the Soviet share of which is to constitute a minimum of

51 per cent. Our Western partners in a joint venture will be entitled to repatriate a certain proportion of the profit (depending on their share in the joint stock) or reinvest it in schemes for expansion.

The promise of sufficiently high profit held out by such joint ventures naturally attracts Western businessmen. At the same time, however, many people here feared that this form of business cooperation with Western companies would inevitably lead to foreign capital appropriating part of the wealth created by Soviet workers and engineers. Traditional foreign trade transactions were alleged to be more acceptable because they did not involve profit-sharing. Are there any grounds for such apprehensions?

The profit to be derived by a Western partner from a joint venture will constitute his entrepreneurial income from capital obtained under the specific conditions of the socialist economy. In terms of economics, this profit is part of the national income transferred abroad, as in traditional export and import deals. Such a transfer is inevitably conditioned by the difference in domestic and average world production cost levels. This means that if it costs less to produce certain items in the U.S.S.R. than elsewhere (and bringing production costs down is exactly the purpose for which joint enterprises are being set up) the marketing of these enterprises' products at home and abroad will be of greater economic benefit to us than the manufacture of relatively less competitive goods.

It would be in place to recall here that Lenin admitted of and encouraged the practice of foreign concessions in Soviet Russia and paying a certain "tribute" to foreign capital, on condition that this capital was under the socialist state's supervision and control. Although attracting foreign concessionaires is not on the agenda today, Lenin's approach to cooperation with capitalist companies is quite applicable to joint enterprises.

In the early years of Soviet power Lenin stressed the need to learn from capitalists how to organize modern production and conduct foreign trade. Joint ventures afford our economic managers just this opportunity to learn from Western businessmen. We are not shy of admitting this. As a Western observer put it, the Soviets propose "to inject" American efficiency, Japanese initiative and German discipline into their economy.

Consequently, we see joint ventures

as a way of learning advanced foreign experience and gearing it to the needs of socialist construction. Incidentally, drawing upon the latest in production organization and techniques is not disdained by leading American and West European companies either, many of which have set up joint ventures with their Japanese counterparts over the last few years.

Fitting into the Planning System

Joint enterprises operating in Soviet territory will not only manufacture products under Western licences, using Western knowhow, but also bring up to commercial level new items developed by Soviet scientists and designers. Many Western economists point out in this connection that the Soviet Union has a vast backlog of new engineering ideas.

The bulk of the joint ventures' profits will come from the sale of their products abroad, third countries included, although a certain proportion of their output will of course be marketed in the Soviet Union. Western firms intend the products of the joint enterprises for export, because they expect to bring production costs down to

The Soviet engineering industry can keep joint enterprises supplied with up-to-date metalworking technology. The flexible Tanka-500 system, manufactured at the machine tool amalgamation of Ivanovo, turns out base members measuring up to 800 mm.

From Sovetsky Export (U.S.S.R.)



a minimum, thus ensuring the high competitiveness of their goods on the world market. A representative of the Italian company FIAT in Moscow maintains, for instance, that the Soviet Union is an ideal partner for those wishing to expand quantity production, reduce production costs, make full use of the latest in equipment and automate manufacturing processes. The Soviet side is also interested in all this. Furthermore, putting new Soviet and Western technologies to full-scale industrial use and broadening the range of products will enable us to vary our exports of manufactured goods and reduce the dependence of Soviet foreign trade on fuel, feedstock and semi-finished products.

Western businessmen are of the opinion that the outlook for joint ventures is brightest in such fields as power engineering, the chemical and woodworking industries, the production of medical equipment, the agro-industrial complex, commercial fishing, transport, and consumer goods manufacture. Interest in the new form of business cooperation with the U.S.S.R. has already been evinced by dozens of companies in the capitalist world, including Dresser Industries, Inc., Occidental Petroleum Corp., Monsanto Co., Singer Co., General Electric, Rank Xerox (all U.S.); Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Itochu, Nissan, Mitsui (Japan); Siemens (F.R.G.); Lavalin (Canada); Philips (Holland), to name only a few.

Judging from what we have heard at negotiations with foreign firms and from comments in the Western press, the acutest problem facing East-West coproduction is whether it is compatible with our centralized planning system and with the state monopoly of foreign trade. The newspaper *The Financial Times*, for instance, believes that these companies should "not be subject to any control by the state planning organization Gosplan."

As one reads such comments, one cannot help wondering whether certain quarters in the West see the joint enterprises developing, in the long run, into kinds of "semi-Western enclaves" embedded in the Soviet planned economy. Anyone who has even a modest awareness of the workings of the Soviet economy will see the absurdity of this notion.

Indeed, the new and more extensive rights many Soviet organizations and industrial plants will enjoy from now

on in the sphere of foreign trade apply equally (or, perhaps, to a still greater extent) to joint enterprises. This does not at all mean, however, that the state monopoly of foreign trade is over. Joint ventures do not affect this monopoly in any way.

The Soviet side will be represented in joint ventures by the state rather than by private individuals. These companies will have to abide by the legal, social and moral norms accepted in Soviet society. As for planning the work of joint enterprises, the most rational way to do it would probably be at two different levels, with only the general specialization of company and export value indices set by the central authority, and all the production, organizational and business arrangements left to the managing bodies of the joint company itself. The Soviet participants in a joint venture will not limit their Western partners' initiative either in technology selection, production cost optimization, or the organization of product marketing.

At the same time, there exist in the U.S.S.R. certain socio-economic phenomena which our Western partners will have to take into account. These are, in particular, our labour laws and trade union rights pertaining to wages, social benefits, employment guarantees, health care, etc. This means that at a joint enterprise—whatever form of coproduction with a Western company it adopts—wage and salary levels, hiring and dismissal procedures and social welfare practices should not differ in principle from those generally accepted in the Soviet Union.

Such, in general outline, are the basic principles that will underlie joint ventures. As for details, both ourselves and our prospective partners in the West should learn more about each other and improve the mechanism of cooperation if these joint ventures, now under discussion, are to become a reality. We expect our Western partners to adopt new attitudes and ways of new economic thinking. As a first step towards advanced forms of cooperation, the West should remove all politicking from its business relations with the East and lift artificial restrictions on mutually profitable trade.

NOTES • REMARKS

● EXPOSE

A CIA BRANCH

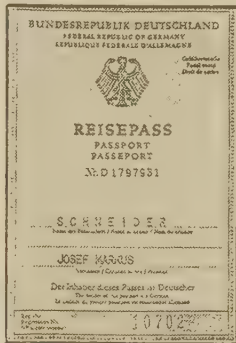
Before he was infiltrated into Afghanistan, Dija el-Din Mahmud was trained at a CIA camp near, of all



A CIA "trainee" in the F.R.G.; a CIA-faked passport.

From Der Spiegel (F.R.G.)

Department for Safeguarding the Constitution. There they collect the intelligence they need over a cup of coffee or a glass of brandy. Where no informants are forthcoming, they employ the most sophisticated snooper technology. The CIA eavesdrops on West German



radio relay communications and telephone systems.

The CIA technical centre is housed in a building in

Frankfurt, previously owned by the IG Farbenindustrie chemical concern. For cover it goes by the name of the department of the army detachments. Further, at all U.S. military bases in the F.R.G. there are teams from the counter-intelligence corps and the office of special investigations to keep an eye on the activities of "groupings critical of the U.S." According to a former CIA agent, his colleagues read private correspondence of West German citizens and occasionally stage illicit "checks" of flats.

Are the appropriate West German offices aware of these activities? An unnamed official at the Department for Safeguarding the Constitution told the Der Spiegel correspondent that "the Americans do nothing without coordination." However, a MAD expert takes a more realistic view. "The F.R.G. authorities know far from everything," he says.

places, Munich. With other dushmans he attended lectures and learned to use firearms and handle explosives. According to Der Spiegel, many CIA agents and hirelings have been trained at clandestine camps in the Federal Republic, the "biggest CIA branch overseas."

At the same time, the CIA is snooping against the Federal Republic itself. Former CIA operative Philip Agee claims that 50-odd CIA agents are on the U.S. embassy payroll in the F.R.G. alone, while there is a CIA chief of base at every U.S. consulate in the country. All in all, some 200 various American representations in 75 places collect intelligence.

Further, according to Der Spiegel, CIA officers call informally on regional branches of the Military Counterintelligence Service (MAD) and of the

When, in 1707, during the War of the Spanish Succession, the French sank the British ship HMS Association near the Scilly Islands off the southwest coast of England, its valuable cargo, including silver jewellery, guns and some 20,000 gold coins, ended up on the seabed.

Only recently, HMS Association was boarded again. It took 18 years for a team of British marine archeologists, led by Jim Heslin and Terry Hyron, to raise the sunken treasure during which time they had to brave the storms and strong underwater currents. The treasures have now been catalogued and deposited with the local museum in the administrative seat of the Scilly Islands.

TASS photos



● TERRORISM

SAVE US FROM THE SAVIOURS

Toulon's Maison du Para was opened in grand style by none other than the mayor, François Trucy, of the right-of-centre Union for French Democracy (UDF). The Maison's clients assure people that "we do not go in for politics, we are a purely sporting association." Why, then, are the walls plaster-

ed with posters "winning back ones"? Why, rifles (see t from Le Nouve teur), army reg army uniforms? member go mo specified time haircut, or turn he is fined 50 f a second infrin sults in being fore the board.

The Maison the headquart extreme right- SOS-France. save the co Arabs and Co the instructors, eign Legionr young membe group. They cla Communists hav stripped Fran empire while t there are 8, Africans in To captured the ci soon occupy country. The cannot wait for when they "dor and fight." They ing and learning firearms. And n

The group's leader was Clia, who perp acts of terroris ing Arab sho and restaurant eventually bei up, along with federates, by a which he had i dynamite "Arab

The banditr "sporting parac inflamed the s the city. The ma begging the M the Interior to France. But w heard in Paris?





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АЭРОФЛОТ
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THE "WATER WEAPON"

South Korean newsmen have come up with a scoop. They claim that North Korea has devised a new mass killer weapon against the South Koreans. The technical principle at work in this diabolical weapon is shocking indeed.

A hydropower plant is now going up on the Pukhan River near the border with South Korea. However, it is not kilowatts that Pyongyang has in mind, we learn. When the occasion presents itself, the entire mass of dammed up water will swirl down on the south! The hydrodynamic strike will wash away every living thing in the neighbourhood of Seoul and government offices will be flooded. Heinous indeed!

For added persuasiveness, the newspapers have even featured the design estimates for the reservoir, but in their haste their arithmetic has let them down.

Thus, South Koreans are to be soused with "20 billion tons of water from a reservoir covering an area of 2,200 square kilometres from behind a 120-metre-high dam." With the right arithmetic we get not 20 but only 3.6 billion tons of water, nearly as much as has long been contained, without jeopardizing anyone's life, in the reservoir of the hydropower station on the Soyang River in the South Korean province of Kangwon. Nevertheless, the "hydrodynamic strike at South Korean territory" has been pronounced almost a fait accompli. Local newspapers compare the destruction it will supposedly effect with that of an H-bomb.

A surprising parallel! While showing such tender concern for the fates of the 15 million living in the Pukhan River basin, Seoul newspapers keep mum about the likely consequences should 1,000 units of nuclear weaponry deployed throughout South Korea ever be used. Should that happen they would instantaneously kill the country's entire population of 50 million and

reduce the Korean peninsula to ashes.

While South Koreans look with alarm at the outline of the hydropower station going up in the North, preparations are being made to deploy tactical Lance missiles behind their backs. These missiles are capable of delivering nuclear, chemical and neutron warheads to any point in the

peninsula—the territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As for the hydropower station that has been pronounced a "superweapon," it is actually a national asset for the whole Korean people. Far from menacing anybody, it will protect the vast lowlands in the Pukhan River basin from inundation as well as generate electricity.



● ASTRONOMY

ASTEROID OR BOMB?

Eugene Shoemaker, the respected U.S. scientist, alarmed colleagues recently with the following catastrophic scenario. Supposing a powerful nuclear-type explosion were to occur over a country. Its government would think it an attack by a neighbouring state with whom relations were strained. It would send out nuclear bombers, but only later, when the situation is beyond repair, would it learn that the explosion had been caused not by a nuclear bomb but by a large meteorite.

It seems that on plunging into the denser layers of the atmosphere, a meteorite 25 metres across would generate an explosion equivalent to that of a one-megaton bomb. Shoemaker has estimated that the trajectories of such celestial bodies intersect with the Earth's orbit every thirty years on average. Larger asteroids causing explosions equivalent to 20 megatons, appear once every 400 years; and every 100,000 years the Earth could collide with a giant comet or asteroid a kilometre across, capable of generating an explosion equivalent to

10,000 megatons. Something of the kind has already happened this century. In 1908 a giant meteorite fell in the area of the Stony Tunguska River in Siberia. The meteorite was at least 60 metres across and generated an explosion equivalent to 12 megatons.

But supposing this were to happen today?

Countries in possession of sophisticated military technology, such as the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., would immediately be able to identify the explosion as having been produced by an asteroid, as it would have been accompanied by a low temperature and there would have been no radioactive fallout. But suppose it were to occur over the territory of a less developed country?

Shoemaker has proposed that the U.S. volunteer to define the type of explosion and immediately notify the countries concerned when an explosion is of cosmic origin. There is an alternative: why not eliminate nuclear weapons? Then the explosion produced by an asteroid would cause no confusion at all.

Eugene Shoemaker; an artist's impression of an asteroid dropping into the sea.

Photo and drawing from Time (U.S.A.)

DOWNING STREET 10 THE CENSOR

Law courts in Sydney and Dublin have declined to ban the publication in Australia and Ireland of the two books about the British counterintelligence service MI5 which the British government wanted withdrawn. One is about MI5 surveillance of former Prime Minister Harold Wilson.

AGAINST BULLFIGHTING

The corrida the pride of Spain! Not at all, says a new mass movement launched to outlaw bullfighting. A booklet was recently published, entitled "The Shame of Spain," with pictures of 50 bulls slaughtered by foreadors. Public opinion polls have revealed that only 18 per cent of the Spanish population are bullfighting fans.

ALMS FOR OXFORD?

The chancellors of Oxford University, the oldest in Britain, say that reduced government subsidies are preventing them taking on academic staff, destroying the university's libraries, and, in the final analysis, lowering university standards. The university has been compelled to launch a campaign for donations.

LIVING UP TO ITS NAME

Over the past 15 years Dallas police slayings have increased by 31 per cent, according to the U.S. Crime Control Institute.

FORWARD PEDAL!

The Swiss army's 80,000 bicycles—designed in 1905 and each weighing 22.5 kilogrammes—are to be replaced by new, lighter models by the year 2000.

STONE WALLS DO NOT A PRISON MAKE

Ronald McIntosh and Samantha Dorinda Lopez were apprehended at a jeweller's in Sacramento, California, upon entering to collect prepaid wedding rings. On November 5 McIntosh, a fugitive from a jail near San Francisco, hijacked a helicopter to pick up his bride, Lopez, who was also serving a sentence, from the prison yard.

PRANKS OF THE TIGER

VITALY IGNATENKO and YURI TAVROVSKY

Tokyo has donned its New Year garb very early this year. Even the Marunouchi, the Japanese capital's business centre, has decorated the polished marble-faced towers of banks, trade and industrial corporations with tinsel and Christmas trees. Advertisements offer exotic New Year trips by train (as usual trains run on schedule, only still faster than a few years ago) and by planes owned by Japan Air Lines and ANA (All Nippon Airways), an up-and-coming air company. Those Japanese with enough yens to spend can see the world and live in a setting they are used to—Japanese hotels and service—in Paris, London, San Francisco, where you will.

As from November Ginza, which has quietly outdone New York's Fifth Avenue, has been setting fashions in furs, jewellery, and other Christmas-gift goods. The shopwindows ooze wealth and luxury.

The end of the year is thought to be the best time to reaffirm a feeling of national prosperity and stability.

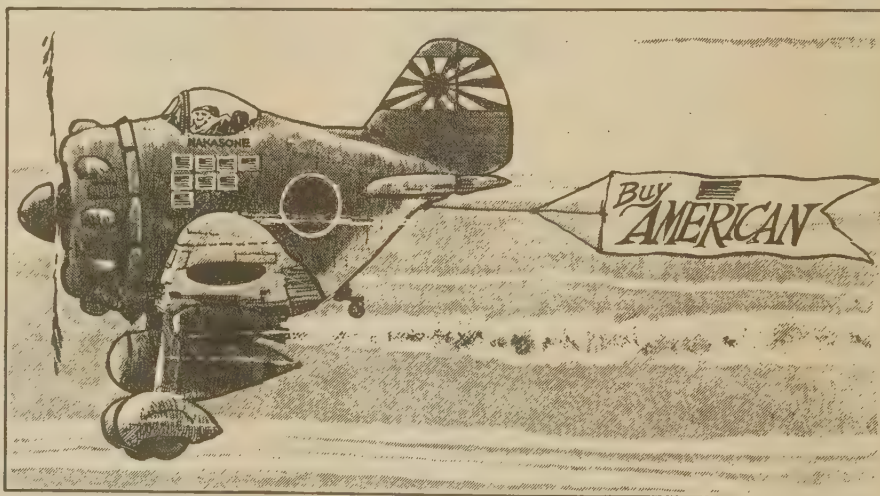
Then comes a bolt from the blue. TV and newspapers flash the news of a volcanic eruption. Lava floods the streets. The whole population of the small island of Oshima is evacuated.

The island, 150 km. from Tokyo, is part of the Tokyo prefecture. It is a popular holiday resort with hot springs. The Japanese like its charming villages climbing the slopes of Mihara volcano. Silent for more than two centuries, one fine day the volcano came to life, roaring, shaking and spewing lava. For several hours TV crews reported the eruption live from the foot of the volcano before they were driven away by the flood of molten rock. An evacuation order was given and reporters moved their cameras to the piers in the vicinity of Tokyo to which ferries and naval ships were delivering the refugees.

The Mihara eruption shook Japan in the literal and the figurative sense. The tremors with epicentres around Oshima Island were felt by between 30 and 40 million people in the vast industrial area around Tokyo. Speculation and argument was triggered about predictions of an earthquake in the mid-1980s that would be similar to the one

in 1923, which practically wiped out Tokyo, Yokohama and several other cities. TV broadcasts and newspapers bristled with such half-forgotten words as "shock," "disaster," "tremors." Success-spoilt Japanese were worried. Again, as in former times, they were reminded of the fickleness of their prosperity, their dependence on the blind forces of nature and political and economic storms that cannot be controlled by computers.

pared to the "1955 system" that had existed up to then. In 1955, more than 30 years ago, the merger of the Liberal and Democratic parties formed the Liberal Democratic Party ruling since that time, and the Socialist Party, which had managed to overcome a split within its ranks, established itself as the chief opposition force. Although the LDP has been steadily losing voters and has on several occasions come close to losing its majority in parliament, the



The U.S. constantly demands free access to the Japanese market for U.S.-made goods. Premier Nakasone has exhorted his compatriots to "buy American." However, now Americans fear Japanese concerns might buy up all of America.

From the Asahi Evening News (Japan)

The eruption of the volcano on Oshima Island was a parting shot from the eventful Year of the Tiger (according to the lunar calendar). People recalled that the fortune-tellers had predicted that the Tiger would spring a lot of surprises in 1986. Reality, however, exceeded all expectations and prophecies. Let us, for example, consider the domestic political scene.

1986 System

The aftermath of the Liberal Democratic Party victory at the double elections last July proved so important as to produce a new coinage—"the 1986 system." It reflects some drastic changes on the political scene com-

Socialist Party could never form a government, alone or in coalition with other opposition parties. Even so, the "1955 system" created the illusion of a two-party system, cherished by the advocates of bourgeois democracy.

The long-term consequences of the switch to the "1986 system" are only beginning to emerge. Meanwhile the immediate result of the July double elections brought serious changes in the structure of both the opposition and the ruling parties. The former Socialist leadership under Masashi Ishibashi assumed responsibility for the electoral defeat and resigned. On September 6 the party elected as its leader the former deputy chairman of its executive committee, Takako Doi, who thus became the first woman in Japan's history to head a political party.

The electoral victory brought about many changes inside the LDP. The relative importance of the factions in terms of membership and influence changed. The Tanaka faction, which now has more seats in parliament than the whole of the Socialist Party, has remained in the lead. The struggle for political succession within the faction continues, however. The leading contender is Noboru Takeshita who also covets the post of head of government. Another serious contestant is Kiichi Miyazawa, who heads the second biggest faction within the party. Yet another faction has changed its leader. It is now being headed by Shintaro Abe, the former foreign minister, who also wants to replace Nakasone as prime minister. Their hopes may be dashed if the present prime minister, who heads his own faction in parliament, objects.

The "1986 system" has increased the influence not only of the LDP, but of Nakasone personally. The Prime Minister's political prowess was highly instrumental in splitting and weakening the opposition, mapping out election campaign strategy, and timing the election. As a tribute to Nakasone's personal contribution, the LDP leadership decided to extend his tenure as the head of the party and government by another year, contrary to the party's rules. Few people believe, however, that the Prime Minister will remain in his seat until next October. The power-hungry "new leaders" and senior members of the LDP hostile to Nakasone have launched a veritable guerrilla war against him, as they say here.

But the main result of the LDP's July success was the strengthening of reactionary trends in its policy. This is witnessed by such measures as its readiness to take part in the "star wars" programme, and the privatization of state railways scheduled for next spring. This project brought a sharp reaction from all those who oppose Nakasone's policy. Railwaymen and trade unions are protesting angrily. The protest sometimes takes extreme forms, such as the mass suicide of 92 railwaymen threatened with dismissal.

The drafting of a law on "combating espionage" is in full swing. The law reminds many Japanese of the years of the military-fascist regime. More and more often calls are made to ignore the opposition and use the LDP's majority in parliament's houses and commissions to "push through" any bills it thinks necessary.

The Japanese Tracks

Japan never tires of bowing to its relations with the U.S. That these relations are of paramount importance is nothing new. But there are some surprising developments which may of course be attributed to the Year of the Tiger and dismissed as the Tiger's pranks. For instance, looking through November and December newspapers, one is intrigued by the evolution of Tokyo journalists' coverage of the political scandal hotting up in the U.S. The newspaper Asahi wrote in an editorial entitled "President's Credibility Undermined": "The Iranian scandal has undermined the prestige not only of Reagan but of the whole of American foreign policy. Not only did Washington make a secret deal with Teheran, which the Americans had publicly branded for assisting terrorists. By its shipments of arms, the United States added fuel to the flames of the Iran-Iraq conflict and used the proceeds from the sales illegally to finance the anti-government units in Nicaragua. The present scandal has highlighted the gap between the Reagan Administration's words and deeds, and called into question its ability to pursue a credible foreign policy."

Subsequently, television and the press injected a note of ironic sympathy for the country's clumsy ally in their coverage of the Iran arms shipments affair, and most recently an unexpected note of alarm crept in. The press learned of secret go-between missions in Teheran carried out by Japanese emissaries on instructions from the U.S. Commentators hinted or asserted that Japan would have to pay a high price if its complicity in the American affair is revealed. Some uncomfortable questions were asked: if "Japanese tracks" emerge, what would then be left of Tokyo's relatively independent Middle East policy? What would be the future of the hitherto preferential relations with the Arab states supplying badly needed oil to Japan?

Needless to say, Japan is used to paying a high price for its "special relations" with Washington. So far it has been doing so willingly, or at least it appears to be so from the outside. As before, Japan promptly responds to any American foreign policy appeals and emphasizes its interested participation in the U.S. strategic plans in the Far East. In short, Japan's relations with its American ally as far as these issues are concerned are quite stable.

Japan is willingly harnessing itself to "star wars." Ever louder calls are heard

to make the Japanese presence in SDI as noticeable as possible. The Japanese do not mind learning about the plans and actions of their own corporations from the American military and industrial establishment. Thus, in early December the Mitsubishi Jukogyo engineering concern was "latched" onto the American Reytheon Manufacturing and the West German Telefunken to develop systems to intercept short-range missiles.

A Circle with Sharp Angles

By contrast, trade and economic relations between Japan and the U.S. have been marked by a series of rows and recriminations. Why is America routinely using strong language about Japanese behaviour in world trade?

At the start of the occupation of Japan, General MacArthur fixed the rate of exchange as 360 yen to one dollar. (The general had been told that the word "yen" means "round." This probably clinched the fate of the yen as the general liked rotundity of any kind, including that of the circle—360 degrees.)

The rate of 360 yen to the dollar held for a long time, but this year the dollar hit an all-time low of 156 yen. In August, Americans were shocked to learn that for the first time in the history of financial business, the Japanese bank Dai-ichi Kangyo topped the list of the world's biggest banking companies. The New York Times commented that as the assets of the Japanese banks were growing, partly due to the soaring rate of the yen against the dollar, the banks were becoming bolder, more aggressive and more inventive. The Japanese were already buying banks in the U.S. and Australia, financing iron-ore mining in Brazil and the building of the Channel tunnel to link Britain and France. Following the example of Japanese companies, such banks as Dai-ichi Kangyo are breaking into foreign markets, partly by offering cheaper loans than their rivals.

Shortly, figures on Japanese-American trade in 1986 will be released. Tokyo and Washington have already done the rough reckoning. The expected U.S. deficit will be \$65 billion. This unhappy figure will cause fury and lead to more calls to stand up to the Japanese.

The Japanese newspapers are keeping a tally of such bellicose calls. Lee Iacocca, president of the Chrysler

Corporation, said that the U.S. was now at the height of another war against Japan. If it were an equal bout Americans would be happy to settle for a draw. But it was not an equal fight. The field was slanted heavily towards Japan. Besides, the U.S. was playing with one hand tied behind its back. No wonder it was losing out.

The incomes of Japanese car firms account for about half the U.S. deficit. It has to be said that up to a point President Reagan and his Californian team have managed to contain the outrage of American big business. The malcontents are being reminded of

for Japanese goods which absorbs about two fifths of Japanese exports.

Second, Americans have suddenly become aware of the Japanese tendency to be self-assured and even arrogant in relations with the U.S. This arrogance is expressed not only in ill-considered (or carefully thought out) "impromptu" utterances by Japanese government leaders. Thoroughly selected statistics also have a part to play. The local press, for example, made much of the fact that the nominal yearly income of an

86人の犠牲者を追悼



This Japanese Socialist Party poster says that over the last two years 86 railwaymen, who expected to be made redundant due to privatization of the state railways, committed suicide. Actually the figure is 92. Such is the price in human life of Tokyo's reform.

Japan's strategic role. But the White House finds it increasingly difficult to control the Democrats on Capitol Hill. The following statement by Texas Congressman Jack Brooks is indicative of feeling towards Japan: "God bless Harry Truman. He dropped two of 'em. He should've dropped four [atom bombs]."

In an editorial office we were shown, with some regret, a reprint from the American newspaper Newsday commenting on the recent remarks of Prime Minister Nakasone about the low IQs of some Americans. "If we are just plain dumb," writes Newsday, "then no amount of depreciation in the dollar is going to correct the enormous trade deficit with Japan." Still, continues the newspaper, "it feeds American suspicions that behind the official façade of Japanese civility, there lurks a self-satisfaction at having made idiots of us in world markets." Japan follows such publications closely. The Japanese discuss them and express fears that their ally could follow up with practical steps. First, protectionist barriers could be raised in the U.S., the major market

average Japanese amounts to \$17,000, a thousand dollars more than the income of the average American. Another symptomatic fact that comes in for daily matter-of-fact discussion is that Japan has this year emerged as the world's major creditor nation, with \$130 billion. In this connection it is mentioned that the U.S. has topped the list of the world's debtor nations, with \$107 billion.

There is something repugnant about this game of one-upmanship on New Year's eve. One feels behind it a desire to cut the partner down to size and show others what they are worth. But let us not be too hard on the newspapers and the political statements being made in Japan as the year is drawing to a close. Perhaps these are the parting pranks of the Tiger. Next year will be the year of the Rabbit. The chances are that he too has a lot of tricks up his sleeve.

Tokyo, December

Legend has it that it was on Rip Mountain that Cech, the founder of the Czech nation, commanded his descendants to make their country abundant and prosperous. This lends a certain symbolism to the characters in Jan Kozak's new novel "Adam and Eve" who devoted themselves to laying a wonderful garden near Rip Mountain. It was indeed an uphill struggle as they had to contend not only with natural disasters and daily problems, but with people who resisted novelty and hated innovation, lived at the expense of others and shirked hard work. Literary critics have noted the topical relevance of Kozak's novel.

"We were facing great difficulties. Many industrial enterprises in our region were short of their production targets. This year's targets were under threat. Unless we got the situation under control we might have found ourselves in a predicament. This was particularly bad for our morale coming as it did shortly after the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia held its congress." This was how our first talk in Ostrava began. At the Socialist Youth League mine we were frankly told about the reasons why the plan just adopted was not being fulfilled. The heading-machine operators had met with complex problems the management failed to foresee. Coal is running thin. To cap it all, there was a fire in the best mine early this year. Work had to be stopped and the mine has fallen tens of thousands of tons short.

"Our only reserve was overtime," our hosts told us. "We decided to work at weekends until we made good the shortfall. We worked in four shifts. The decision was not an easy one, but the party committee and the management, after talking to team leaders, party group organizers and trade union and youth leaders, decided this was the only answer. In October we made up the shortfall. We are now going to meet the yearly target, but at a price. For several months people and machines have worked under heavy strain. We know that in having our people work at weekends we were violating the party's demand to take care of miners' health. But one can imagine what would have happened if the yearly plan had not been fulfilled and how this would have hit the miners. We must remember what Ostrava means for the country's economy."

Ostrava is called the steel heart of Czechoslovakia. Until recently a typical sight in the city was a forest of chimney stacks and a "moonscape" of abandoned coal mines. Much of the coal reserves has been depleted, the earth

The Garden by Rip Mountain

**Show initiative, take a hand yourself,
say our Czechoslovak hosts**

subsiding in some places and villages having to be moved. Land is being recultivated and the refuse heaps are being planted with trees and flowers. The mining city is getting new "lungs."

Czechoslovakia is the third biggest producer of brown coal in the world and the tenth producer of standard coal. Coal, the stocks of which are limited, will also be necessary for future generations.

With the team of miners led by Alois Poloch we descended into the Staric mine, noted for its technological achievements. Shortly before our meeting the team had set a record by tunnelling 151 metres through hard rock during a month. How did they manage to do so?

The mine has up-to-date technology, beginning with a computerized control room with two desks, one for mining and the other for safety. All the miners carry magnetic cards with their personal code number so that the computer can locate them quickly.

The current modernization of mining in the Ostrava-Karvina coalfield has already reduced the demand for fresh labour.

The Socialist Youth League mine, the most up-to-date and fully automated mine in Ostrava, has many young workers.

Last year the mine initiated a five-year programme of work with young miners, which starts at the mining vocational school. The parents of future miners are invited to the pit to see for themselves where their children will work, learn about their wages, and the sports and recreation facilities they will enjoy. On the day he enters the school the youth receives a savings book with 8,000 crowns deposited on the account. But he can only get the money after passing his graduation exams and taking up his job.

In recent years pupils have been apprenticed to mining teams. The management guarantees that the graduate will be assigned to the team to which he is apprenticed.

And yet the labour turnover is still high. Every year 2,000 people leave the mine. Of course, new workers are hired, but they have no experience and need to be trained.

"We are still paying for the mistakes made in the 1960s," says Vilem Golas, secretary of the party committee. "At that time some people argued that we no longer needed coal. Investment in the coal industry was cut and miners were told that their trade was doomed. Thus, a whole generation swung away from mining which they thought unattractive. This attitude affected our social programmes as well. It is only in the current five-year-plan period that we shall build a big polyclinic and a health complex costing 15 million crowns."

Each year the vocational school sends 150 new workers to the Staric mine. Two out of three graduates are the children of miners. And yet until recently parents objected to their children going into mining. Some people come from Slovakia where there is still some untapped manpower. But how to make people stay?

"By creating good if not excellent living conditions. By giving them apartments and helping them build their own houses," says Jan Rajch, deputy manager of the Staric mine. "How can we expect a person to work well if he hasn't got a decent dwelling? Miners' wages are high enough, up to 8,000 crowns a month. But this leads to higher demand: formerly they wanted to own a car, now they want to own a house."

All the increment in the national income in Czechoslovakia during the current five-year-plan period is to be due to higher labour productivity. So far, there is no ground for being satisfied. The economy is not being intensified fast enough. And commitments to raise productivity and improve the quality of goods are not being met. Economists and economic executives must shed old stereotypes, ideas and habits engendered by extensive economic development because they distort the main criteria

of the performance of the enterprise, the economy as a whole and man's role in society. Jan Fojtik, secretary of the CPCz Central Committee described the orientation on the mediocre worker as one of the most harmful tendencies.

In short, the economic executives and party committees are now giving priority to social issues, the creation of conditions that stimulate initiative. This is what we were told by the heads of practically all the mines in Ostrava. This is the approach taken by other forward-looking economic managers. The manager of the carpet-making factory Bytex proudly showed us a brand-new polyclinic built next to the factory. It has doctors in every speciality, excellent cardiovascular diagnostic equipment, massage rooms and other treatments. To see a dentist, have one's blood pressure taken or have an injection, all one has to do is pop out of the factory for 20 minutes during the lunch break, and not take half a day off as before.

The housing situation in Czechoslovakia is better than in most other member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. The average floor space per person is 22 square metres. One flat is occupied by three persons on average. But there is still a shortage of housing, especially in Prague, while people who move into new flats are not always pleased with their quality. But the important thing is that 44 per cent of the building cost is subsidized. And long-term bank loans are available. Besides, in buying a cooperative apartment, future owners help to build the house themselves. This results in shorter building time and better quality.

We have become interested in this scheme because the housing problem in the Soviet Union is still acute. Should people just sit back and wait for a new flat, especially if you take into account that waiting lists are still long?

The appearance in the Soviet Union of youth housing complexes built by young people themselves is the first step in this direction. The newly adopted law on individual labour opens up new opportunities for this. Under article 15 of the new law citizens can participate in "the building, repair and improvement of dwellings."

We are also short of kindergartens, schools, swimming pools and clubs. How are they tackling this problem in Czechoslovakia?

**B. PISHCHIK and
L. MLECHIN**
our special correspondents

Prague—Moscow

(To be continued)

The Pontifical Academy of Sciences recently held its jubilee session. For the first time in the history of the Academy, a Soviet journalist was present.

Warning from Pius IV House

ANATOLY KRASIKOV

A pleasant surprise awaited me at the Vatican press centre—I met some old friends. I was especially happy to see French journalist Max Bergerre, author of the well-known book "Six Popes, One Journalist." It was he who many years ago had helped me, then a young TASS correspondent, arrange for my accreditation to the Holy See, initiated me into the intricacies of Vatican policy and introduced me to John XXIII and Paul VI. This time, too, he was instrumental in speeding up the formalities. Sister Giovanna of the press centre staff conducted me to the office of her chief, Dr Joaquin Navarro-Valls, whom I found to be an extremely courteous and interesting person. In the upshot, I left his office with a pass to the Vatican City.

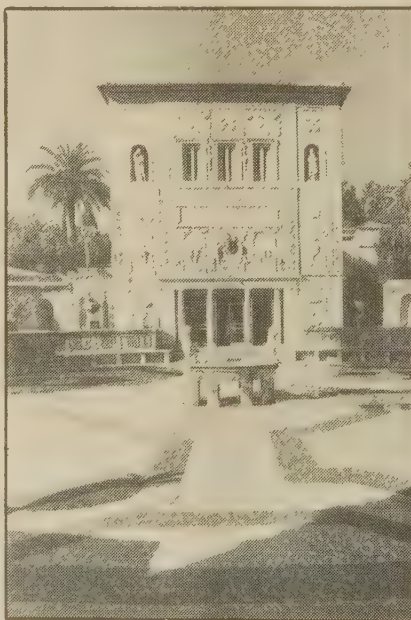
I wanted to learn from first hand about the anti-war activity of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences which was observing its 50th anniversary at the time. And in particular about its pronouncement against "star wars" which, according to press reports, Pope John Paul II had not made public so as not to embarrass Reagan. But first, some general background information.

The Academy occupies a small, elegant villa in the depths of the Vatican gardens known as the Casina Pio IV, or Pius IV House. Built in 1561 by the architect Pirro Ligorio as a private retreat for the pontiffs, it was remodelled several times and acquired its present appearance in the 20th century at the time of Pius XI who in 1936 founded a new scientific centre on the basis of the former Lincei Academy.

According to its statutes endorsed in 1976, the purpose of the Pontifical Academy is to promote the develop-

ment of mathematics, physics and the natural sciences. The Academy periodically holds sessions, arranges meetings of scientists with a view to facilitating the search for solutions of important scientific, technological, social and ethical problems, and helps to advance research in diverse fields.

The members of the Academy are appointed by the Pope personally but are



not subordinated to the Holy See. Eligible for membership are well-known scientists, irrespective of nationality and religious beliefs. At the present time the Pontifical Academy consists of 83 members from 26 countries; 79 are life members, one is an honorary member (Silvio Ranzi, professor of biology at

Milan University), three are "perdurante munere," i.e., for the duration of their tenure of office in the Vatican state (prefect of the Apostolic Library, director of the Vatican Observatory and prefect of the Secret Archives of the Holy See).

The members of the Academy include 15 from the U.S., 10 from France, eight from Britain, seven from Italy, six from Switzerland, three each from Canada, Sweden, Brazil and the Vatican, two each from the F.R.G., Japan, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Kenya and Poland, and one each from Argentina, Chile, Holland, Hungary, India, Israel, Mexico, Pakistan and Zaire. Thus, only three Academy members are from socialist countries. All the more noteworthy is it, then, that on fundamental issues of war and peace the Pontifical Academy has declared for the termination of the disastrous arms race and for relations of mutually beneficial cooperation among nations with different social systems.

This was one of the central issues taken up not only at the jubilee forum of scientists in Pius IV House but also at other important meetings held in recent years.

"A few days after the November 1979 session," President of the Academy, the prominent Brazilian scientist Carlos Chagas, professor of biology and biophysics at Rio de Janeiro University, writes in the foreword to a collection of documents issued by the Pontifical Academy, "after consulting with my colleagues I sent a letter to Pope John Paul II pointing to the danger of nuclear war and the devastation that would be caused by nuclear bombing. His Holiness expressed the wish to use some of the facts cited in the letter in his January 1980 pastoral peace message. In May of the same year the Academy set up a working group which was received by the Pontiff for an exchange of views on this issue. In several of his subsequent public pronouncements His Holiness touched upon the subject of nuclear war, specifically in Hiroshima on February 25, 1981.

"A second working group," Professor Chagas continues, "consisting of 14 scientists from five countries (the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., France, Italy and Brazil) planned to meet in May 1981, but owing to the attempt on the Pope's life the meeting was postponed until October. The statement it had drafted concerning the exclusively medical consequences of nuclear bombings was presented to His Holiness, and, on the initiative of the Holy See, was handed

by Academy members to the leaders of the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., France and Britain, and also to the U.N. Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly."

Let us interrupt Professor Carlos Chagas for a moment to recall some of the basic provisions of this document which came to be known as the Statement on the Consequences of the Use of Nuclear Weapons. In at once restrained and impassioned terms it stressed that recent talk about winning or even surviving a nuclear war reflects a failure to appreciate a medical reality: any nuclear war would inevitably cause death, disease and suffering of pandemic proportions and without the possibility of effective medical intervention.

Deadly Threat to Civilization

Citing the blood-chilling testimony of the Japanese Professor M. Ichimaru, who witnessed the horrors of the Nagasaki bombing, the statement says: "But even these grim pictures are inadequate to describe the human disaster that would result from an attack on a country by today's stockpiles of nuclear weapons." Even a nuclear attack directed only at military facilities would be devastating to the country as a whole, it is pointed out further.

The consequences of nuclear war are not only medical in nature, the statement emphasizes. But those that are compel us to pay heed to the inescapable lesson of contemporary medicine: where treatment of a given disease is ineffective or where costs are insupportable, attention must be turned to prevention. Both conditions apply to the effects of nuclear war. Treatment would be virtually impossible and the costs would be staggering. Can any stronger argument be marshalled for a preventive strategy? "If we remain silent," the statement says, "we risk betraying ourselves and our civilization."

On December 15, 1981, representatives of the Pontifical Academy were received by the top leaders of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. In Moscow the scientists were informed in concrete terms of what the Soviet Union was doing to avert the danger of nuclear war. They agreed that in the present situation there was an imperative need for the broad participation of peace forces in action to strengthen international peace and security.

After the meeting in the White House, the leader of the Academy delegation told newsmen that the U.S. President had taken note of the opinion of the scientists but had not promised to take any definite action. Reagan, the Acad-

emy spokesman stressed, had declined to admit that there could be no victor in a nuclear war.

But to return to Carlos Chagas. In February 1982, he says, under the sponsorship of His Eminence Cardinal König, a meeting was held in Vienna to coordinate the initiatives already taken by the Pontifical Academy with those which had been taken by the eminent Archbishop. At the end of March the Academy organized a meeting of a small group of scientists (non-members of the Academy) in London to draw up a new document on the mounting danger of war. By the summer of the same year the draft was completed. The text was sent to the presidents of the academies of sciences in the world, together with a letter of invitation to the meeting to be held in Rome on September 23-24 to finalize the document.

That is how the second anti-war document issued by the Pontifical Academy came into being—the Declaration on the Prevention of Nuclear War, which was signed by 61 scientists.

"The catastrophe of nuclear war can and must be prevented," it says. "Leaders and governments have a grave responsibility to fulfil in this regard. But it is humankind as a whole which must act for its survival. This is the greatest moral issue that humanity has ever faced, and there is no time to be lost."

The members of the Academy appealed to national leaders, to scientists, to religious leaders, to people everywhere "to reaffirm their faith in the destiny of humankind, to insist that the avoidance of war is a common responsibility, to combat the belief that nuclear conflict is unavoidable, and to labour unceasingly towards ensuring the future of generations to come."

A little more than a year later a plenary meeting of the Academy was held at the Vatican on the theme "Science for Peace." Speakers demanded an end to the insane arms race which is leading mankind to catastrophe. The session approved a statement pointing out that two thirds of mankind live today under arduous, at times unendurable conditions. To render them effective help it would be enough to use a mere 7 per cent of the sums being spent in the world today for military purposes.

"On January 23-25, 1984," Carlos Chagas continues, "eighteen scientists met at Pius IV House to draw the attention of the world community once again to the consequences of nuclear war and, in particular, to the long-term

effect of nuclear war on the global climate."

The Horrors of "Nuclear Winter"

The document entitled "Nuclear Winter—a Warning" begins with the statement that "nuclear war would include among its immediate consequences the death of a large proportion of the populations in combatant nations ... long-term consequences might be as dire as the prompt effects, if not worse.

"In a nuclear war," it continues, "weapons exploded near the ground would inject large quantities of dust into the atmosphere, and those exploded over cities and forests would suddenly generate enormous amounts of sooty smoke from the resulting fires. The clouds of fine particles would soon spread ... absorbing and scattering sunlight and thus darkening and cooling the earth's surface..."

"Nuclear winter," the document points out further, would greatly increase human suffering, including in countries not directly involved in the hostilities. A considerable number of survivors of the immediate consequences of nuclear war would in all probability die later of cold, hunger, disease and nuclear radiation. Many species of plant and animal life would disappear as well as much of the natural environment outside of the ocean.

"What space research holds out for humanity" was the subject of a seven-day seminar held in the Vatican in October 1984. Addressing the participants in the seminar, Pope John Paul II thanked the Academy and its President for arranging such an interesting undertaking. Outer space, the Pontiff said, belongs to the whole of humanity. The launching of satellites and other space devices should be regulated by fair international agreements and covenants.

Although he did not declare against the militarization of outer space, the head of the Roman Catholic Church urged scientists engaged in research and technological development "to seek the God of peace."

The scientists responded to the Pontiff's appeal as their conscience prompted them. At an international meeting in January 1985 on the arms race in outer space, they unanimously came out against its militarization. Commenting on the aims and objectives of this new forum, director of the chancellery of the Pontifical Academy Enrico Di Rovasenda put it plainly: "We want to give the world scientific information about the horrific consequences of 'star wars.'" Several months later the press of Italy and other countries reported that the

participants in the forum, including American and Soviet scientists, had unanimously adopted a document rejecting the idea of "star wars."

According to the Rome newspaper *Paes Sera* it had been originally intended to make the document public immediately after the meeting, but later it was decided to submit it to the head of the Roman Catholic Church for subsequent release. However, the Vatican authorities deemed it necessary to put off for the time being publication of a text so discordant with U.S. policy. On July 9, 1986, the *New York Times* reported that official Washington had been "pressing for its remaining secret."

Nevertheless, during the jubilee session of the Academy Carlos Chagas made no secret of the scientists' attitude to SDI:

"I may say that we are categorically opposed to this project for various reasons, both moral and scientific."

The Vatican and SDI

Taking the seat assigned me in the session hall of the Pius IV House I found before me a complete collection of Academy publications on questions of war and peace—neatly-bound documents issued in 1981, 1982 and 1984 numbered 3, 4 and 11. Only the last report, the one on "star wars," was missing.

There was evident reluctance in the Vatican to juxtapose the opinion of the Pontifical Academy to the striving of the United States through SDI to extend the arms race to outer space in order to gain military superiority over the Soviet Union.

However, going carefully through pamphlet No. 67, printed just before the session and listing all the principal documents issued by the Academy in the 50 years of its existence, I found on pages 169 and 170 brief résumés of the "censored" document, which stated that in the interests of peace, militarization of outer space should be avoided and it would be well to conclude a relevant international agreement.

It is the conviction of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences that even the most powerful strategic defence system would not ensure reliable defence against a nuclear missile strike. Attempts to create such a system would not reduce the nuclear missile potential but, on the contrary, would make for a further buildup of offensive weapons. Should one of the sides eventually succeed in creating if only a partially effective defensive system, the present strategic balance would be upset and this would precipitate a crisis.

Scientists from 13 countries, including the U.S.S.R. and the U.S., and also from several international organizations, declared for outer space being used for the benefit of mankind.

Some time after the jubilee session, an appeal for continued development of international cooperation in peaceful space exploration was made by Pope John Paul II during an audience in the Vatican granted the participants in a symposium of a consultative group of space agencies held in Padua in early November. It had been attended by delegations from Intercosmos, which unites a number of socialist countries, NASA of the United States, NASDA of Japan and the European Space Agency.

"I take this solemn occasion when you are all gathered here together to urge you to continue that activity towards peace and harmony which characterized the progress of space flights," the Pope said. He emphasized the need to "avoid allowing space technology to become hostile activity."

This time, too, John Paul II displayed maximum caution, choosing his words carefully so that they could not be interpreted as direct condemnation of "star wars."

The scientists once again demonstrated their devotion to their civic duty. At the round-table meeting with which the jubilee session ended in the Pius IV House they again underscored the inseparable link between the problems of science and the preservation of peace.

"We are in duty bound," Carlos Chagas said, "to help resolve the most urgent problems facing mankind, to help improve the well-being of people. Our task is to serve good, not evil."

Nearly all the participants in the round table, among them Alexander Rich (U.S.), Manfred Eigen (F.R.G.), Sune Bergström (Sweden) and Mambillikalathil Menon (India), called for intensified effort by scientists in defence of peace. Carlo Rubbia, Italian physicist and Nobel Prize winner, who was one of the last to take the floor, reminded his audience that to prevent the irreparable from happening the peoples are entitled to full and authentic information about the possible consequences of the decisions taken by their governments.

Vatican—Moscow

Stability and security in Asia and the Pacific was reaffirmed as a major goal of Soviet foreign policy by Mikhail Gorbachev during his visit to India. The implementation of Moscow's proposals naturally depends on the political will of many states, not least on that of the United States, a major Pacific power. "Undoubtedly, the problem of security and cooperation in the Pacific region cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties concerned without the U.S. and its participation," the Soviet leader said in his Vladivostok speech.

But what is Washington's Pacific policy? How did it take shape? Will the U.S. help improve the political climate in the region?

After the Americans had invaded and settled California, Oregon and other states on the western coast in the mid-19th century, they began to forget the concept formulated a few decades previously that the Pacific was a natural frontier for the U.S. There was talk of the ocean being a part of the U.S. sphere of interest. The ocean offered a means of expansion into Asia. Following "the call of destiny," the ships of American naval officer Matthew Perry "discovered" Japan and other countries in Asia. U.S. settlers engineered coups in Hawaii and other Pacific islands and annexed them to the "great American democracy." President McKinley's government unleashed the first imperialist war against the decrepit Spanish Empire to recarve the world and took Guam and the Philippines away from it. The boundless Chinese market lay immediately beyond the Philippines, Senator Albert Beveridge said at the time, and Americans would never relinquish either.... The Pacific was their ocean, he continued. The power that dominated the Pacific would rule the world and, when the Philippines was under its control, the American republic would forever be such a power.

The Americans have been seeking to dominate the Pacific for more than a century and a half. The Reagan Administration has given it fresh impetus and new dimensions and pointedness.

Predicting a great future for the Pacific, Washington believes that it will be Americanized and militarized. "A new frontier that offers the United States boundless opportunities combined with great hazards is opening up thousands of miles from American shores," the U.S. News and World Report observed. "This new frontier lies along a vast rim of the far Pacific, stretching from South Korea in the north to New Zealand in the south. 'The Pacific century' is how some now see the next 100 years."

Washington's concept of "advancing frontiers"

New Conquistadors

Professor YURI MELNIKOV, D. Sc. (Hist.)

This idea is at the root of a project for the establishment of a Pacific community, originating in Japan and immediately supported by the U.S. Small wonder that Washington has jumped at the Japanese plan: economic priorities are intended to disguise the expansionist ambitions of the United States.

The economic, commercial, financial, scientific and technological policy of the U.S. is directed at the exploitation of natural and human resources in the region.

Washington's foreign economic policy is often discriminatory (bans on many exports to socialist countries are one example) and pursues political and military ends, such as gaining footholds in the territories of some states, involving them in military and political alliances or influencing their policies so as to make them curtail the public sector and encourage private enterprise. As a consequence, U.S. economic relations with many countries in the region are either very limited (the U.S.S.R. and Mongolia), highly competitive (Japan and Australia) or unequal (the Philippines and Thailand). This in itself blocks plans for a Pacific community or Pacific economic cooperation and complicates U.S. relations with many countries, not only socialist but also capitalist, industrialized and developing alike. In an effort to un-

dercut Japanese competition, Washington is demanding from Tokyo increased military spending and arms production. It is trying to offset the fall in the competitiveness of American civilian products by pressing arms sales on some ASEAN countries. Finally, promises of military backing or, conversely, shows of force are viewed by U.S. leaders as leverage to wrench from Pacific countries economic and other concessions.

Washington has noted on more than one occasion that it would like a Pacific community to be a NATO-type grouping and in close relationship with that aggressive bloc. The Americans would like a Pacific community to be a field for the unbridled operations of American transnationals and a stage for confrontation with the U.S.S.R. and the forces of national liberation and social progress in the east. Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger has said that the slogan for the advance of America and its "frontier" ever farther westward from the Californian coast could be the call "for faith, gold and glory" of conquistadors of all countries and ages. "All of this progress has taken place under the shadow of American power," Admiral William Crowe, current chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said when he commanded the U.S. forces in the Pacific. "As our economic interests move in that direction, it is

inevitable that ultimately our security policy has to stay in step."

Plans to establish a Pacific community are not favoured by most of the countries in Asia and the Pacific. That is why Washington is building up its military potential and involving in its strategy those countries which are either strongly dependent on it or desirous to benefit from close military and political cooperation with the United States.

The alliance between the U.S. and Japan is especially dangerous in this respect. Washington is stepping up war preparations in South Korea, where American nuclear weapons are deployed, as well as in the Philippines and Thailand, and the Micronesian islands, which Washington is going to annex.

Washington's policy is characterized by a desire to keep up and foment conflicts and differences between some countries in the region.

As well as using its own military, economic, scientific and technological leverage Washington is trying to rely on its allies, and regimes and groupings with a stake in dealings with the United States. However, there are fewer and fewer such allies and groupings. One of the latest losses was the Marcos regime in the Philippines, while the Seoul dictatorship is going through a crisis and New Zealand has closed its ports to American nuclear-armed ships. U.S. economic, ideological and especially military expansion is coming up against strong resistance from many countries, which do not want the Pacific to become a militarized lake for the Americans.

Urging the United States to contribute to the solution of Pacific problems, the Soviet Union is simultaneously countering Washington's expansionist course with a programme to involve the region in the process of establishing a comprehensive system of international security formulated by the 27th Congress of the CPSU. While the current Pacific strategy of the United States continues to fuel mistrust and tension, the Soviet programme offers real prospects for the establishment of a zone of peace and progress in that vast, rich and dynamic region of the world.

The U.S. keeps its biggest fleet in the Pacific, regarding warships as a reliable means of extending its sphere of influence in that region.

TASS photo



From time to time the press mentions the trilateral commission. Could you please describe this body, its composition and the range of its activities?

N. TUGARIN, Shchelykovo, Kostroma Region, U.S.S.R.

A BODY OF THE ELITE

Information about the trilateral commission is scant. The body was set up in 1973 on the initiative of David Rockefeller, then head of one of the most powerful financial empires in the West. Its members include over 300 prominent businessmen, bourgeois statesmen and researchers such as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Alexander Haig, Henry Kissinger, Raymond Barre, Otto Wolff von Amerongen and Saburo Okita.

Former commission members hold influential government posts in capitalist states. Almost half the members of the commission are heads of major, especially transnational, corporations. That is why newsmen sometimes call the commission an "invisible government." The definition is rather farfetched, though the interest its activities arouse is quite legitimate. The documents prepared under its auspices show attempts to elaborate a socio-economic strategy or even a political philosophy for transnational monopoly capital.

That the commission came into being in the first half of the 1970s is by no means fortuitous. The capitalist world was then in the grip of a most acute and deep-seated structural crisis, and those at the helm in the West felt that research, which would indicate if not a way out of the crisis then at least ways of alleviating its effects, was on the order of the day. Transnational corporations and banks needed a politico-economic platform, to define their interests and map out long-term policy in a changing world. The trilateral commission has tackled this task.

Its reports cover a wide

range of subjects—the threat of nuclear war, regional conflicts, hunger in the Third World, ecology and growing unemployment. The roots of all economic ills in the capitalist world are ascribed mainly to the contradiction between the growing interdependence and national sovereignty of states.

The commission works on various projects to promulgate ways and means of the state-monopoly regulation of the economy to international economic relations so as to secure dominant positions for transnational corporations and banks. It also urges the maximum coordination of the economic and political courses of the leading capitalist states. National governments, Brzezinski, Owen and Okita point out, should pay more attention to coordinating decisions they adopt.

The transnational monopolies and their ideologues strive to limit national sovereignty, which hinders their activities, and to create adequate supranational mechanisms, to substantiate their claims to control the capitalist world economy.

However, the commission's theoreticians are aware of the fact that the acute competition between national groups of capital, backed by their respective states, weakens imperialism's position in the global class confrontation. It is obvious that calls for class

unity are not enough to overcome the contradictions that beset the capitalist world. The commission therefore offers a system of compromises under which "each government agrees to take action it might prefer to avoid, in return for the advantages which the actions taken by other governments will bring to it." The heads of the seven leading capitalist states are trying to act along these lines. At their annual meetings they seek—without notable success, however—a common position on outstanding questions of world economics and politics.

Of late, the trilateral commission has been paying considerable attention to problems of international security.

Irrespective of their political and class sympathies and antipathies, the commission's members are aware that nuclear war would be "a catastrophe from which our globe might not recover" and try to dissociate themselves from the most adventurist schemes.

Thus, a report significantly entitled "Trilateral Security" takes a realistic view of Reagan's plans to develop a space-based ABM system. Experts believe that even if the extremely complex technical problems involved are resolved, "deployment of BMD by both the United States and the Soviet Union would be likely to precipitate a further competition in offensive nuclear weapons designed to overcome the defences, which could be both costly and dangerous."

The commission also advocates the earliest agreement on a total and universal ban on nuclear tests. It underscores the need to consolidate the nuclear non-prolife-

ration regime and censures the deployment of first-strike MX strategic missile system in the U.S.

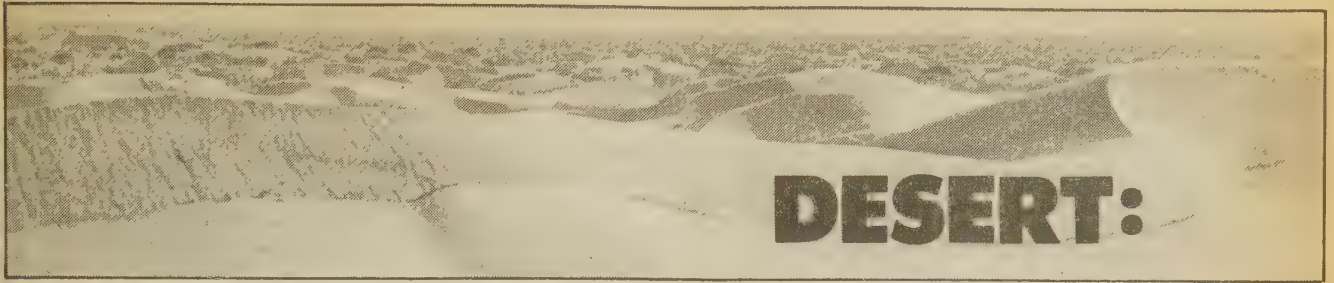
At the same time, while putting forward plans to secure "trilateral security," i.e., the security of the three centres of capitalism, the commission does not renounce armed confrontation with real socialism and progressive Third World regimes. It seeks not to stop the arms race but to find the most "effective" directions for the arms buildup.

New types of nuclear ammunition for "limited" wars of short duration and new conventional weapons, ever more destructive and sophisticated—that is how the commission visualizes the West's military potential in the immediate future.

In other words, the authors of the concept of "trilateral security" are looking for a way out of the nuclear blind alley in the further perfecting of conventional weapons. "During the 1980s and 1990s," they write, "the likely advent of more effective long-range conventional strike systems, including cruise and ballistic missiles with advanced munitions, will probably make available non-nuclear means for... missions with reduced risks of nuclear escalation."

The concept is fallacious. Not only nuclear, but even large-scale conventional conflict could lead industrialized civilization to the brink of annihilation. The commission's findings thus fail to break out of the vicious circle of outdated political thinking. Its dogmas have simply been slightly refurbished to adapt them to the new realities.

Y. FYODOROV



ETERNAL WASTELAND OR POTENTIAL FOR PRODUCTION?

LEONID PLESHAKOV

Deserts have probably received more attention from the media in the past decade than any other geographical zone. The main reason is the direct relationship between deserts and drought.

Which came first, the hen or the egg? Desert or drought? Which is the cause and which the effect?

Such questions seem abstract against the background of news reports from disaster zones. These reports sound as tragic as dispatches from theatres of war. There are antagonists locked in a life-and-death struggle, advancing and retreating, winning victories and conceding defeats. Although no shots are fired, this struggle creates more than enough problems for politicians, diplomats, economists and experts in different fields of knowledge and production. There also are far-reaching strategies and devastating consequences.

Here are some of these reports.

A telegram from China: "A large part of the southern maritime province of Fujian has been hit by drought since late June. Altogether 313,000 hectares of rice paddies are withering in scorching heat. Some regions in the mountains have been hit especially hard. Hundreds of thousands of farmers are planting late-season rice and repairing irrigation facilities. Weathermen say the drought will continue and the provincial authorities are providing relief. Technicians and skilled workers are joining farmers in the fields. Rigorous water conservation measures have been introduced in cities, both in households and industry, to convert as much water as possible to irrigation."

News from Africa:

"One of Africa's largest lakes, Chad,

which lies at the junction of the borders of Chad, Cameroon, Nigeria and Niger, is drying up at an alarming rate. The water has retreated from the old shore by 60 to 80 kilometres in some places.

"People in the lakeside villages are in a difficult position. Projects to irrigate farmland around the lake have been put off till better times. The cause of all these troubles is the drought, which has persisted almost unabated since the early 1970s. An ecological disaster of a comparable scale had already struck once before, in 1908, when the shallow land-locked lake dried up completely."

Another report:

"The city of Nouakchott, now the capital of Mauritania, was founded only 28 years ago but today it faces the threat of extinction. The Sahara is advancing on the city at a rate of 20 metres a year. Some districts have already been buried in sand."

The African continent has been dealt devastating blows over the last 10-15 years. The year 1984 was especially hard for many African countries. Drought without precedent in living memory hit more than half the territory of the continent. The water of the Nile, Africa's largest river, dropped to its lowest level since 1611.

The recent prolonged drought in Africa was the worst this century. It affected even Africa's forests and, along with desertification processes, had devastating social and economic

consequences in many countries of the continent.

The United Nations Secretary-General's report says that in late 1983 and early 1984 more than 150 million Africans were suffering from famine, malnutrition and frequent shortages of drinking water. Low rainfall (if any) caused bad shortfalls in livestock production and crop farming. As many as 21 African countries had been hit by critical food shortages by April 1985.

Large masses of the population began to migrate, causing additional difficulties. More than 10 million people left their homes.

Hundreds of thousands of people in Ethiopia's northern provinces, hit especially hard by the drought, left the disaster zone for areas with better living conditions: it was their only chance of survival.

Past and Future

The problems caused by deserts and droughts are global in the true sense of the word: they affect the whole world. Natural devastation worked by the erosion and salination of the soil, the depletion of forests and the drying up of bodies of water have affected vast tracts of land, especially in Africa and Asia, and these processes are continuing. Artificial earth satellites have collected data indicating that 53 per cent of the territory of Africa and 34 per cent of that of Asia have been affected by desertification to one extent or another. According to U.N. figures, roughly 150 million farmers in China, India and islands in Southeast Asia have had to abandon crop grow-

ing because their fields can no longer sustain harvests.

The process has assumed especially alarming proportions in Africa's Sahel, a wide belt of land stretching from the Atlantic coast across the continent towards the upper reaches of the Nile and beyond it to the Red Sea. The area was given its name in 1900 by the French scholar Auguste Chevalier, and it means "coast" in Arabic. The French explorer must have seen the Sahara, advancing from the north, as a sand ocean, the waves of which kept pounding the "coast line" of the neighbouring geographical zone and pushing back its boundary. This slow but inexorable onslaught of sand has continued ever the decades at a rate of 4.8 km a year, burying fertile fields. In the last few years the desert has swallowed a 150-km-wide stretch of the Sahel. If the process does not stop, in about 50 years the Sahara will have devoured three or even four of the eight Sahel states.

Optimists argue that these processes are temporary. The Sahel has been exposed to bad droughts so often, for instance, in 1941-42 and between 1972 and 1975. The entire territory would become lifeless desert, but then spring back to life, like the fairy-tale Phoenix.

But the pessimists (or, rather, well-informed optimists) have a strong case. Aerial surveys and satellites have spotted in the Sahara traces of the beds of ancient rivers, which flowed in prehistoric times, and depressions, which must once have been lakes. Archeological finds in that region and in the scorching Arabian Desert are proof that there were highly developed civilizations there long ago, which could only have survived in far better climatic conditions than today.

The conclusion prompts itself that Nature is working only one way, slowly but inexorably turning ever new areas into desert.

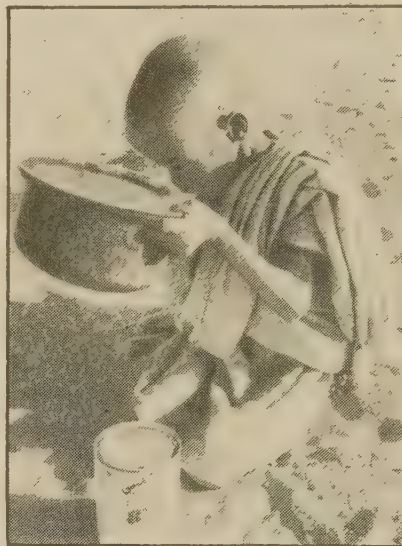
Drought is the only natural element (with the exception of, perhaps, floods) which can be influenced by man, stopped altogether or hastened. The felling of forests for building materials and firewood has destroyed some traditional catchment areas of atmospheric precipitation and resulted in desertification. Agricultural mismanagement also contributes to these processes. Irrigation blunders have caused salination of fertile land and the development of virgin lands in arid regions has led to "black storms."

Environmentalists, critical of the consumerist attitude to Nature, are fond of telling the following story. When men's camel hair coats became the height of fashion in France, clothes manufacturers sensed a "gold mine" and began de-

veloping it with gusto: nomadic tribes in North Africa were offered a better price for camel hair and the camel population was drastically boosted. But the barren pastures could not sustain the enlarged herds and were soon exhausted. The fashion eventually petered but the overworked land has never recovered.

It is a sad tale, no doubt, but ecologists say that anthropogenic effects on Nature under earlier generations are incomparable with what humankind has in store for the environment in the near future. The problem we are about to face is known as the "hothouse effect."

Specialists estimate that about 5 billion tons of hydrocarbons are burned in the world as fuel every year. This



More than 150 million starved or suffered from malnutrition and a shortage of drinking water during Africa's recent cruel drought.

Photo from Stern (F.R.G.)

process, along with the felling of forests all over the world, increases carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide lets through solar light but keeps in the heat, preventing it from escaping into outer space. Soviet and American scientists say that if oil, coal, gas and shale consumption continues to grow at the present rate, the average atmospheric temperature in the world will have risen by roughly two degrees Centigrade by about the year 2025. U.N. experts conclude that temperature on the planet may be raised by 1.5 to 4.5 degrees in the lifetime of the next two generations due to the same causes.

Scientists differ only in figures but not in their assessment of the overall trend. And this trend is fraught with far-reaching adverse consequences: the higher the atmospheric tempera-

ture, the more the Earth's surface is heated and the greater the desiccation of the soil.

All this faces humanity with problems that are far from easy, especially in view of the forecast that the world's population, which is roughly 4.6 billion today, will have reached 6.1 billion by the year 2000. Africa will have a population of about 800 million, twice the figure in 1975, by the beginning of the next millennium. If we bear in mind that famine was widespread on the continent during the 1970s and relate the demographic forecast to the depletion of farmland due to desertification, it will be clear why scientists are sounding the alarm.

Archimedes' Dream

We have so far discussed the problems and disasters with which deserts confront man. Mankind, however, has already made some progress in the development of the deserts.

The bulk of the world's known oil and natural gas deposits lie in deserts and semi-deserts. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Algeria, Soviet Central Asia, Mexico and Texas, far from exhausting the list, are sufficient to give an idea of the wealth hidden in the depths of these un hospitable, sun-scorched lands. They also contain gold and diamonds, phosphorites and sulphur, iron ore and nonferrous metals, uranium, bauxites, coal and potassium salts.

But what seems to be one of the main boons of the deserts is the abundance of fertile soil which, combined with plentiful heat, could yield generous food supply for the people.

How can this be done?

Archimedes lacked very little to turn the globe—only a fulcrum for a lever he presumably already had. The lever and fulcrum that would turn the deserts into a source of plenty for people is the same, water.

People living in moderate climates can never know the true value of water.

A journalistic assignment once brought me to the South Gobi Aimak (region) of the Mongolian People's Republic. My business over, I asked to be shown some natural "wonder" about which I could tell my readers. I was fairly certain that I would be taken to some "cemetery" of dinosaurs and shown a striking collection of fossilized pre-historic animals. Yet after a brief parley, my hospitable hosts said in unison: "We will show you eternal ice and a river." I was amazed: eternal ice and a river in the Gobi?

Our jeep travelled for a couple of hours across a gravel-covered plain,

which seemed the more monotonous because of the rare, stunted bushes of desiccated wormwood. Then brown hills rose ahead. They stood not more than 150-200 metres tall and their peaks and gorges made them look like real mountains—well, not mountains but scaled-down models.

The car descended into a valley between two ranges of hills, ran on to the dried-up bed of a rivulet and came to a halt. Steep slopes rose on either side, forming a gorge not more than a dozen metres wide. We walked along a pure spring, only a few inches deep, which took a sharp turn to the right—and I saw a 20-metre-long drift of packed snow under an overhanging rock facing northwards. Water and the cold made it as hard as ice and the high rock kept the hot sun away. It was October and the tiny "glacier" was not likely to melt till winter. However hard I tried, I would never have guessed that this vestige of the past winter was the local "gem of nature," "eternal ice."

"And where is the river?" I asked.

"At your feet," my guides told me. It was the tiny spring.

It is only people of the deserts who value water so much, as much as life itself, because it is life. When arid land is given water, it becomes fertile.

Irrigation, which has been known since time immemorial, has now been given a new lease of life. Figures supplied by the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage show that in 1980 about 245 million hectares, or roughly 16.5 per cent of the world's farmland, were under irrigation. Irrigated land yields half of the world's crop farming output: two thirds of the world's rice harvests and a sizable part of its wheat, cotton, oil-bearing crops, vegetables, fruit and fodder. But many problems have arisen with irrigation as well: salination of the soil by mineralized subterranean water, water-logging in vast areas and local climatic changes.

This efficient means of speeding up economic growth in arid and desert regions has its drawbacks. Although the Earth is for the most part covered by water, it does not have very much "live" fresh water. Today mankind annually consumes 2,600 cubic kilometres of fresh water, which is ten times the run-off of the Volga. The figure will have reached 6,000 cubic kilometres, the aggregate run-off of all the world's rivers, by the year 2000. Most of this water will be used, as today, in agriculture. It follows that the expansion of food production has a limit, which is likely to be reached fairly soon. How then will we be able to cope with famine, which is already a serious prob-

lem today and is bound to grow worse? Will the spectre of famine always haunt man? People continue to search for a way out...

Two Extremes of the Search for Water

Each generation tackles only those tasks that it can cope with. If we take this statement as axiomatic, we can expect different methods of tackling the same problem from today's nations, with their different levels of economic and social development.

Another quotation: "Brothers in Christ, it is our sins that were, are and always will be the cause of all our evils." The Archbishop of Burgos blessed his flock and the silent crowd moved along the street: "Lord our God, have mercy upon us, give us rain," people prayed, raising their hands to the heat-breathing skies.

"The Atlantis space shuttle, with seven astronauts on board blasted off Cape Canaveral, Florida..."

"The programme for the seven-day mission includes astronomical studies, medical experiments and photographing the Earth's surface, especially deserts, to identify subterranean water reserves."

A prayer and a space mission are the extremes at either end of the wide range of quests for solutions to one problem, the shortage of water.

Proposals range from afforestation programmes for lands stripped of their forests in the past (mostly in the dry hot zone), the application of water-conserving processes in crop farming and closed-cycle systems in industry, to the construction of reservoirs, canals and closed water chutes.

The idea of digging a canal from the Mediterranean coast to a depression in the Sahara was mooted early this century. An artificial land-locked sea in Africa, the authors of the project hoped, might change the drastic climate of the desert for the better and provide the preconditions for the economic development of large tracts of land. It was pure utopia, of course.

Some hopes are being pinned on the Antarctic, which contains 95 per cent of the Earth's eternal ice, or 90 per cent of its freshwater reserves. Saudi Arabia and its neighbours, plagued by bad shortages of fresh water, would like to have icebergs towed to them from the Antarctic. Scientists and engineers are already working on such projects. It will take a fleet of ocean-going tugs to pull an iceberg. The size of the ice mountains to be used is quite impres-

sive: 900 metres long, 400 metres wide and 120-200 metres high. The details of this daring (or adventurous?) operation have already been worked out: an iceberg will be "lassoed" with a steel cable and covered with a plastic film to protect it from the sun.

It will take the tugs about seven months to ship an iceberg from the Antarctic to the Arabian Peninsula where it will be sawn into blocks and, as the ice melts, fresh water will be fed into water supply systems and tanks.

From the "Project of the Century" to Sober Analysis

A project to reroute part of the flow of northern Soviet rivers to the arid southern regions of the country was, perhaps, the most controversial economic programme of the past few decades, one that provoked many disputes and critical attacks.

A brief glimpse at the historical background is needed better to understand the purpose of that "project of the century" and the strong criticism it aroused.

The Soviet Union's territory of 22.4 million sq. km. (almost a sixth of the Earth's land) spans different climatic zones, including deserts and semi-deserts. There are abundant water reserves in the northern areas, which have poor conditions for human habitation and farming. The south gets plenty of sunshine and has vast tracts of fertile land which cannot be cultivated because of the shortage of water. The southern regions are also rich in minerals, including oil, gas, complex ores and salts which can be used to make mineral fertilizers and other chemicals. Nor can this wealth be developed efficiently for the most part because of water shortages.

How can the problem be resolved? There are many ways, each tailored to the specific circumstances. The most widespread method today is the development of a system of reservoirs to store spring floodwater and use it according to plan around the year. The run-off of the Volga, Dnieper, Syr Darya, Amu Darya and many other rivers has been regulated in this way. Water is brought to users by a system of canals and pipelines.

An atomic-powered pilot desalination plant has been in operation in the city of Shevchenko on the shore of the Caspian in the Mangyshlak Peninsula, for two decades.

In the Central Asian republics of the Soviet Union irrigation crop farming goes back many centuries. Almost the

entire cotton crop of the Soviet Union and large quantities of grain, melons, vegetables, fruit and grapes in the region rely on irrigation.

The postwar period saw a boom in hydroengineering construction in Central Asia and the arid zones of the lower reaches of the Volga River and the North Caucasus.

The pace of construction work was so high that the run-off of Central Asia's two largest rivers, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya, came to be used almost entirely to meet farming and industrial needs and the Aral Sea, which had depended on them for its

North Caucasus. In principle, the Volga's resources would be more than enough to meet all those needs—but the ultimate concern would be for the Caspian. Without the constant supply from the Volga, the sea level could drop and the shallows of the northern Caspian, breeding grounds for valuable species of fish, especially sturgeon, would dry up (the Caspian yields 90 per cent of the world's sturgeon catch). Water from the northern rivers would eventually end up in the Caspian.

specifications had already been drawn up for others.

It was at that point, when everything seemed to have been decided, agreed upon and written into plans, that public opinion came into play. Changes in the country in the recent period gave considerable opportunity for extensive discussions on major economic development problems in the mass media and at various conferences and meetings. Severe criticism was levelled at the projects. There were among the critics not only engineers, builders, hydroengineering and farming experts and ecologists but also workers in the arts and culture, including actors, historians and writers. Russia has always held writers in high esteem and their position on this issue was very important.

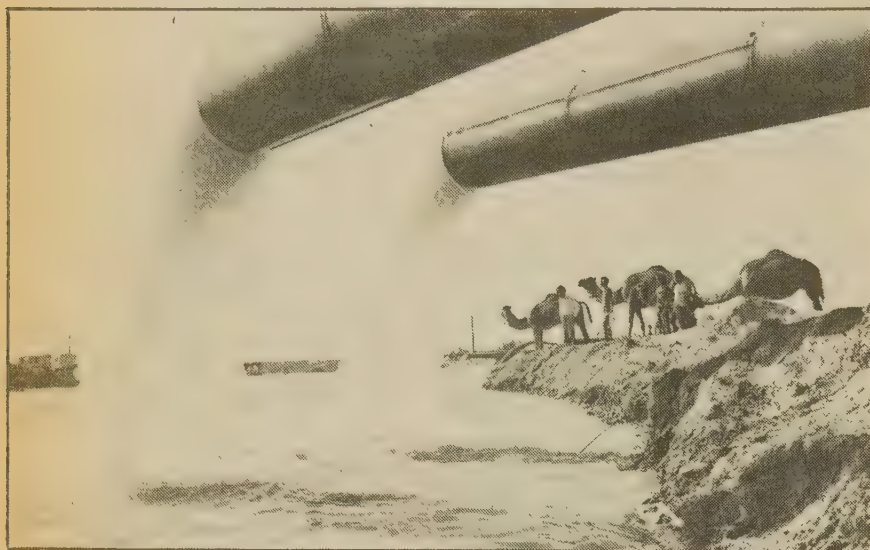
The critics argued that the projects did not provide for adequate environmental protection and had not been analyzed sufficiently from the economic point of view. They also pointed out that water conservation measures and the introduction of new processes in industry and agriculture would help save water in quantities comparable with the volume to be rerouted from the north—at a far lower cost. There was another persuasive argument: the level of the Caspian Sea had begun to rise (although only time will tell if the tendency is lasting).

Eventually the government decided to halt all work on the river rerouting programme and suggested that more thorough research be carried out. The projects may be revived in the future—but at a far higher scientific level.

• • •

Drought remains the worst scourge of man. The International Red Cross has estimated that the number of natural calamities on the planet grew from 43 in 1960 to 81 in 1979. Over the past decade drought afflicted 244 million people against 154 million victims of floods, 28 million victims of tropical hurricanes and 12 million victims of earthquakes.

Mankind should leave nothing undone to fight drought and desertification, and to develop the resources of the deserts: the damage caused by the onslaught of the sand is too grave and the prospects of taming the desert too alluring.



These pipes bring water from the Kara Kum Canal to grazing grounds in Turkmenia.

TASS photo

water supply for millennia, began to dry up rapidly.

But the region still has an untapped reserve of more than 50 million hectares of fertile land. Its development is being held back by shortages of water while the country has still not met its needs in some food products. It has been estimated that irrigation can guarantee bumper grain harvests in the region. That was why the idea began to be mooted of rerouting to the arid southern regions part of the flow of northern rivers that empty into the Arctic Ocean.

The entire programme consisted of two independent projects. First, water from the basin of the Northern Dvina and Pechora was to be diverted to the upper reaches of the Volga, and brought from it via canals and water chutes downstream to the dry land around the Volga estuary, into the Ural River, the desert lands of western Kazakhstan, the Don River and the

The second project envisaged the rerouting of the flow of the Ob and eventually the Yenisei into the Aral Sea basin. Its main goal was to irrigate virgin lands in that arid region; some of the water would be used by industry in the southern Urals area, which already has water shortages, and meet the needs of a new mining area in the east, which is still underdeveloped because of lack of water.

Both projects were subdivided into several construction stages and facilities were to be put into operation one by one extending well into the next century. Although ambitious, they were technologically feasible and, according to preliminary estimates, efficient. Dozens of research and development centres worked on the programme and its economic characteristics and indicators. Some parts of the projects were just being forecast while working

Reggae—Music of Struggle

"Why do we sing reggae? Because it is the music of struggle, as reggae star Bob Marley said."

Thus began our talk with Eli Campbell and other members of the group UB 40 (Britain), the first reggae group to come to our country from abroad. The British musicians performed with great success in Moscow and Leningrad.

Why does the public like reggae so much? Why has it become the music of struggle? We discussed these questions with members of the group who were acquainting us with their own treatment of this original trend in music. In the early 1960s, young Jamaican musicians rebelled against the sway of Anglo-American recording firms and elaborated their own style—ska—a blend of rhythm-and-blues, traditional jazz, and Caribbean rhythms.

The most popular ska groups of the time were Skatalites, Don Drummond and Drumbago, and the Wailers, a young group whose soloist was Bob Marley, a former welder from Kingston.

Bob Marley was to become the first reggae star, and newsmen later called him the first messenger of the new trend. But all that was still to come. Meanwhile, in the early 1960s, the Wailers attracted attention with the song "Jailhouse," upholding the rights of young people. Incidentally, many ska groups protested in their songs against unemployment, poverty and exploitation.

It was only natural that songs in the reggae style that succeeded ska should carry a clear-cut socio-political message. On the musical side, reggae rejected jazz elements, using, nevertheless, traditional jazz instruments such as the saxophone and the trombone. While they emphasize the folk rhythm background, reggae groups make bold use of the achievements of rock and all this makes for the style's originality. Throughout the world, reggae groups were set up, but the Wailers, with superb musicians like Peter Tosh and Bob Marley, always enjoyed the greatest success. For his part, Bob Marley

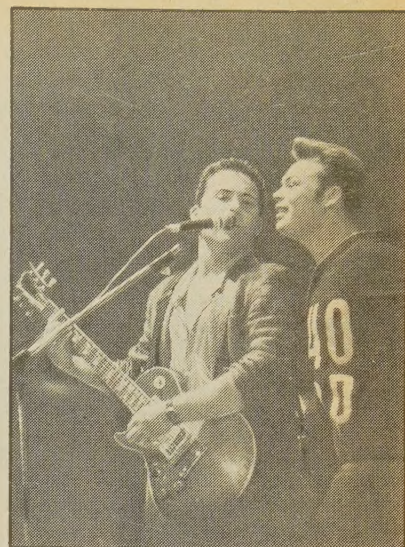
was probably the first reggae composer of wide renown.

Compared with ska, reggae covered a much wider range of subjects. Reggae singers sang about unemployment, hunger and poverty. More than that, they opposed segregation and became staunch fighters for class equality.

More than fifteen years had passed since reggae emerged before its unfailing popularity impelled the magnates of the Western music industry to take an interest in it. Now the doors of sound-recording studios were opened to many reggae groups, and their discs were no longer a rare event in the shops. But there also emerged numerous plagiarists who exploited the popularity of Caribbean melodies, and took the social sting out of the songs and substituted saccharine lyrics.

By the late seventies it seemed that the heyday of reggae was drawing to a close, as had been the case with calypso, samba and other styles. However, Bob Marley's music not only had its imitators but also its faithful followers. In the early eighties reggae, much to the surprise of many reviewers, again came to the fore. In no small measure this was due to the emergence of a group with the defiant name UB 40—the code number of the application form for unemployment benefit—an abbreviation well known in Britain. But, of course, it was not only the challenging name that attracted both the public and critics.

Their very first LP opened with "Tyler," a song about a young black American arrested during an anti-KKK demonstration. The group included it in its first disc put out in the U.S. However, it was "Burden of Shame," a song about our common responsibility for everything that happens in the world, about militarism, racism, events in South Africa and the British phillistine's indifference, that won the group the greatest renown.



The apartheid regime banned the song in South Africa. In protest against the recording firm excluding the song from the disc, the group terminated the profitable contract. UB 40 takes an active part in the Rock Against Apartheid and Racism movement.

"We are convinced that capitalism is doomed," says Eli Campbell. "And we fight it, and song is our weapon. It lays bare the ills of capitalist society."

"And how did Soviet audiences receive you?"

"We did not expect such a warm welcome," guitarist Robin Campbell adds. "Audiences recognized our songs after the very first bars, and that was quite a surprise for us. And that your musicians know and play reggae, the music we consider it our job to promote, is a revelation to us."

Though UB 40 was indeed the first foreign reggae group to tour our country reggae music is well known here. Many Soviet groups sing it at concerts and record it. For instance, the star group Aquarium sang "Babylon," a song from Bob Marley's repertoire, at the opening of the rock club season in Leningrad. Melodiya, the Soviet recording firm, plans to release "Rat in the Kitchen," UB 40's latest disc.

Reggae music tells the truth, no matter how bitter and unpleasant, the truth young people need so much.

Andrei GAVRILOV

Spurt at the Chess Finish



One trophy amongst the plethora won by Soviet grandmasters almost everywhere in the world and displayed at the Central Chess Club of the U.S.S.R. occupies a niche of special honour and importance. A magnificent silver cup, known as the Hamilton-Russell Cup after the man who instituted it, is the top prize offered by the World Chess Federation (FIDE). It is the challenge trophy awarded to the winning team at the bi-annual World Chess Olympiad.

In the 59 years since Lord Hamilton-Russell first presented the cup, it has travelled far and wide. Taking its farewell of London, it has crossed oceans and continents to visit many countries, only occasionally returning to a familiar place, such as Hungary or the United States. However, its wanderings ended in 1952 when, from the Tenth Chess Olympiad in Helsinki on, Soviet grandmasters triumphed time and again at this tournament of nations, and the cup was firmly ensconced amongst the trophies displayed at the Central Chess Club in Moscow.

True, each time the Soviet team entered the lists at succeeding Olympiads, it brought the cup with it to set it up on its pedestal of honour while the tournament was in process, only to take it back to Moscow after upholding the title. This happened 15 times, with the sole exception of 1978, when the Soviet team had to "loan" the cup for two years to its rivals from Hungary.

Now the Soviet team is celebrating its 16th victory. At the world chess tournament in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, both the men's and

ladies' teams won gold medals.

The tournament which has just finished drew about a thousand chess players from 108 countries. FIDE President Florencio Campomanes—reelected at the FIDE General Assembly held concurrently in Dubai—remarked at the closing ceremony that it was the biggest competition ever in chess history. Campomanes had every reason to be proud of this impressive highlight inasmuch as he had made a significant effort to popularize chess in Third World countries. Their teams comprised the majority of entrants at this latest olympiad. Developing nations also hold a majority vote in FIDE. The incumbent President's sole rival, Lincoln Lucena of Brazil, withdrew his candidacy before the vote was taken.

But back to chess.

Let me note at once that there were no sensations as far as the ladies' team was concerned. The magnificent Soviet quartet—Maya Chiburdanidze, Elena Akhmylovskaya, Nonna Gaprindashvili and Nana Alexandria—was second to none. Beating all other teams it romped home to an easy finish, with the celebrated Nonna Gaprindashvili scoring the full house of ten points.

However, the men's tournament had some breath-taking moments. To everyone's surprise, not least its own, the Soviet team, considered the unquestioned favourite, encountered stiff resistance from several European and American teams. Indeed, up to the last day, in fact, the very last minutes of this stupendous contest, the outcome remained in the balance. Our "magnificent six" looked as if they would have to be satis-

fied with the unfamiliar role of runners-up. Only their fantastic spurt in the home stretch of a 4:0 win over the Polish team secured the victory.

How exciting this all was!

How was it that a team comprised of world champion Gary Kasparov, ex-world champion Anatoly Karpov, their runners-up Andrei Sokolov and Artur Yusupov, who rank as the top four in the world chess table, and assisted by such celebrated reserve players as Rafael Vaganian and U.S.S.R. champion Vitaly Tseshkovsky, suddenly lost the lead? How was it that our chess aces appeared to be competing on an equal footing with a range of obviously inferior teams? How did the Soviet team fail to beat its main U.S., British and Yugoslav rivals and even the not so strong Icelandic team?

Only the players themselves can really answer these questions. I shall merely try to offer several conjectures.

It must first be realized that the leading players in each of the entrant countries are now showing far greater prowess. Standards are levelling out, which makes competition stiffer. Further, according to Anatoly Karpov, "it is rare for all participants to be in good fighting form at once. One inevitably lags and his poor results can provoke a dramatically negative chain reaction."

Often one is obliged to forego the logic of the game when motivated by the purely sporting aspect. Thus, Gary Kasparov sustained his one and only loss at the olympiad, when during an adverse turn in the match with the U.S. team he decided to risk his all in his game with

Yasser Seirawan, and lost as a result.

Finally, the Swiss system, with its casting of lots, also gives rise to many chance factors.

Hence the unpredictability of the outcome. The Soviet team drew 2:2 against the British, then beat the Spanish team with 3.5 to 0.5, while the British lost to the Spaniards with the same score and moreover at the decisive moment.

In short, team championships generate far more random incidents than individual tournaments do. We must be grateful to the Soviet team for having eventually managed, even with difficulty, to surmount the negative factors.

With the exception of Vitaly Tseshkovsky, for whom the Olympiad's truncated time limit proved insuperable, all the other Soviet grandmasters worthily defended their titles as champions albeit in different measure. Team leader Gary Kasparov scored 8.5 points out of a possible 11, winning a medal for the best result on the Number One board. Anatoly Karpov and Andrei Sokolov produced the more modest, but nevertheless pretty good scores of six out of nine points each. Rafael Vaganian secured seven points out of a possible ten. The most successful of the Soviet six was Artur Yusupov who got ten points out of twelve. Allocated the responsible role of stopper, he coped brilliantly, winning seven games when playing black. Gary Kasparov said he could well be termed the world black-playing champion.

Though the latest World Chess Olympiad brought many heady moments, our hopes that the Soviet chess school would once again prove its mettle were justified.

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"Tannhäuser" in Alma-Ata

The lights went out, the conductor raised his baton and the majestic music of the overture to "Tannhäuser" sounded for the first time in the Alma-Ata Opera House. The Berlin Deutsche Staatsoper began its tour of Kazakhstan with a performance of this romantic opera by Richard Wagner. For a large part of the audience no translation was needed—half of the total number of Soviet citizens of German origin live in this republic.

The Deutsche Staatsoper of the G.D.R. is about 250 years old, and many world famous singers have appeared on its boards. Alma-Ata theatregoers enjoyed the premiere performance of its ballet troupe which was set up quite recently. Choreographers from Leningrad helped prepare the programme of classical dances to the music of Ravel, Bizet and Hindemith.



**A scene from
"Tannhäuser."**

**Soviet choreographers
working with soloists
of the Staatsoper
ballet troupe.**



TASS photos An excursion to Medeo.





The "antiquary."



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